A

Directory for Youth

Through all the Difficulties attending that State of Life.

Or a Diſcourſe of

Youthful Luſts.

IN WHICH

The Nature and Kinds of them are deſcribed, and Remedies againſt them laid down.

Firſt Preached to Young People, and now Publiſhed at their Requeſt.

By *Samuel Pomfret*, Miniſter of the Goſpel.

For thou writeſt bitter things againſt me, and makeſt me to poſſeſs the Iniquities of my Youth, Job 13. 26.
His Bones are full of the Sins of his Youth, which ſhall lie down with him in the Duſt, Job 20. 11.
Remember not againſt me the Sins of my Youth, Pſal. 25. 7.
I was aſhamed, yea, even confounded, becauſe I did bear the reproach of my Youth, Jer. 31. 19.

Ad vos juvenes mihi Sermo; flos ætatis periculum mentis. Aug. de temp.

London, Printed for *John Dunton* at the Black-Raven in the *Poultry*. 1693.

John Hopkins his book

I have the life of this good man in the first Vol. of the Evangelical magazine

1793 E. A

To the Young People that were Hearers of the following Sermons, and ſince have been ſollicitous for the Publiſhing of them,

Grace and Peace, &c.

Beloved Friends,

THat ſincere *Affection*, and *Compaſſion*, which God hath wrought in me, to your precious Souls, hath prevailed with me (againſt my natural inclination) to yield to your Requeſt, for the printing thoſe Sermons that I Preached from 2 Tim. 2. 22. wherein is recommended to you the weight and neceſſity of St. Paul's *Admonition to* Timothy *to Flee Youthful Luſts*. *The Wiſe Man ſaith*, Prov. 25. 11. A word ſpoken in ſeaſon is like Apples of Gold in Pictures of Silver. *And if ſo, then muſt be allowed me, that I have not miſcarried in my choice of ſuch a Word ſpoken to you:*

Sabbath School Book

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O that I might not miſcarry in my wiſh for you, namely, that it may prove eventually, a Word whereby you may be ſaved. The Word damned *is hard, you would not have that to be your lot. But pray permit me to tell you, (plainly and publickly, without Liſping and Whiſpering) that ſaved you cannot be, and damned you muſt be, except by a true and timous Repentance you flee your Luſts; the infallible truth of which is originated in and built upon his Word, who is Truth it ſelf, and cannot lye, as you may ſee in the* 6. Gal. 7. Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatſoever a man ſoweth, that ſhall he reap. 13. *Luke* 3. Except ye Repent, ye ſhall periſh. 8. *Rom.* 13. If ye live after the Fleſh, ye ſhall dye. 20. *Job* 11. His Bones are full of the Sin of his Youth, which ſhall lie down with him in the Duſt. 5. *Prov.* 11. And thou mourn at the laſt, and ſay, How have I hated Inſtruction, *&c.* 11. *Eccleſ.* 9. Rejoyce O young man, in thy youth——but know thou that for theſe things God will bring thee to Judgment.

O Young People, would you with due care apply theſe things to your own Souls, it were enough to rent the very Caul of a ſecure Heart. I know ſuch is the Depravation of our Natures, that if there were any poſſibility of eſcaping Hell and Damnation, without fleeing our Luſts; we ſhould never voluntarily ſub-

mit to this Godly Counſel given by St. Paul *to young* Timothy. *I have read of a Book that the Pope hath called* Taxa Cameræ Apoſtolicæ, *wherein men may know the Rate of any Sin, upon what terms men may keep a Whore, be Drunk,* &c. *As to that it is a bundle of Lyes. But the Inſpired Scriptures may be truly call'd a Rate-Book, where any of you may know what a beloved Luſt will coſt without Repeneance* (viz.) *the Wrath of God in Hell: and ſo everlaſtingly true is this, that I beg you to deſpair of ever finding the leaſt Jota of God's Word to fail, or fall to the Ground unaccompliſhed.*

I know you will be tempted to do as other Young People commonly do, namely, to forget theſe things, and by the ſloth and averſion of a wretched Heart in conjunction with Satan's temptations, to be carried away to other trivial matters; wherefore let me intreat you, as ever you would avoid the Curſe of Reuben [Unſtable as Water] *to ballaſt your Hearts, by laying in ſtrong and powerful Convictions of the intollerable Evil of Sin, the indiſpenſible neceſſity of Chriſt, and holineſs, the unconceiveable worth, and the precioufneſs of your Souls, and Time, and the unavoidable approach of Death, and Judgment. Look ye, you Young Folks, the Breaſts of whoſe Virginity hath not yet been preſs'd, you are young, and want that Experience that elder* Chriſtians *have;*

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and therefore the greater allowance muſt be made; you muſt allow your Souls more time to digeſt the great myſteries of Religion by Meditation and Prayer: And you are more ſtrongly bent to ſenſual Pleaſures and Sports, and to forget God and your Souls, Death and Judgment. And therefore you muſt ſo much the more chaſtiſe the pregnancy of that Vanity and Folly that is bound up in your Natures by a ſeverer vigilance and abſtinence. When I was young, it pleaſed God of his infinite Mercy, to priviledge me above thouſands with a Religious Education, and by his reſtraining Grace to preſerve me from open Prophaneneſs (bleſſed be his holy Name) But yet notwithſtanding this (to my own juſt ſhame I mention it) in thoſe early and wanton days of my Youth I was miſerably vain, fooliſh, and diſobedient, ſerving divers Luſts and Pleaſures: The bitter remembrance whereof hath (for more than 20 Years paſt) coſt me Sighs and Groans unutterable: Oh! the time's not to be numbred that I have wiſhed I had been ſick in Bed rather than ſinning againſt ſo good a God; the Remote parts of the World *that I have been in, the Roads I have journeyed in, the Fields I have watched in, the Nights I have watched on, the Houſes I have lived in, and the Beds I have lain on, can witneſs to my Tears and Sorrows while I have recogniz'd my Vanities and Folly.*

And

And now foraſmuch as it is utterly impoſſible for me to recall and recover thoſe paſt and miſpent days of my Youth. I would on the bended Knee of Importunity, for my own ſake, as well as your's, beſeech this one thing of you, (as I have of God for you) (viz.) *to take Warning, and to be effectually perſwaded (by the Terrours of the Lord which I have felt) to* Flee that Youthful Luſt, *and with that Godly young man* Moſes, *rather chooſe any Affliction than adventure to ſin; it's a known Sentence* felix quem faciunt, *&c. It's not unknown to many of you, how unwilling I have been drawn to expoſe theſe my homely thoughts to publick view. But an extream thirſt after the preſent Converſion, and Eternal Salvation of your Souls, hath overſwayed me herein: I know God's Bleſſing upon it can make it effectual to reach this end, which is all I aim at, or am ambitious of; and if it ſhall pleaſe Almighty God to make me a poor weak Inſtrument ſucceſsful herein, I ſhall go to my* Grave with joy, *and eſteem it ſo great a Recompence, as if I were young again, or had remembred my Creator in the days of my Youth.*

I am not ignorant of my own Infirmities, but I write not to you Fathers and Mnaſons, *old Diſciples; but to Children and Youth, who need not ſtrong Meat, but Milk. If any other ſhould ſo far humble themſelves, as to caſt an Eye upon ſo mean a Diſcourſe, with whom its buſineſs*

buſineſs is not, I would deſire this of them, that inſtead of loading this poor thing and its Author with harſh and haſty Cenſures, they would lend it and him their help in their hearty Prayer to God for a Bleſſing upon the one, and an increaſe of Gifts and Grace in the other. I eſteem my ſelf oblig'd to acquaint you, that two of theſe Sermons were Preached above a Year ago, and thoſe Young Men that were not my Auditors then, may be apt to think that I have made great alterations in the tranſcribing of them, for as much as here they will meet with a great deal more than what they heard in a ſingle Sermon about ſix Weeks ago, wherein through the ſtreights of time I could do no more than juſt name many particulars, which formerly I was large upon.

I ſhall detain you no longer, only add this hearty deſire for you, That while many of your Age are haſtening the Wrath of God upon this poor Nation by their Atheiſm & Immoralities *that you may be frequenting your Cloſets, and on your Knees mourning for your own and the Nations Sins, e're the Lord come upon us with his fierce Anger, and there be no remedy, which is the hearty deſire of him, who is a willing, though weak and unworthy Servant of Chriſt,*

Samuel Pomfret.

2 Tim. II. xxii.

Flee alſo Youthful Luſts.

IN this Chapter *Paul* proceeds to direct *Tim.* in the right management of his great Work, whereunto he was called; in order to which he inſtructs him, whence he ſhould derive ſtrength for it, *v.* 1. then he exhorts him to propagate thoſe truths to others which he had heard, and received from him, *v.* 2. then he encourageth him to endure hardneſs in his Work, from a two fold Metaphor, *viz.* that of a Souldier, and an Husbandman, who firſt ſtrive and labour, and afterwards receive the reward, and reap the fruit of their pains; from *ver.* 3*d.* to the 8*th.* There he minds him of the Example of Chriſt, who firſt ſuffered, and died and afterwards was raiſed to life again, and thence inferreth that all the

faithful who ſuffer with him, ſhall alſo live and reign with him for ever. From *v.* 8. to the 14*th.* and then he gives other inſtructions, how he ſhould behave himſelf as a workman, that need not be aſhamed, dehorting him from all vain and prophane Bablings, and Errors, that began to infeſt the Church of God; adding an argument that if a man purge himſelf from theſe, he ſhall be a Veſſel of Honour, prepared for his Maſters work, from 14. to the 24*th.* and ſo he cometh to the words in my Text, *Flee alſo youthful Luſts.*

Which admonition to *Tim.* one would have thought might have been omitted, and that upon a two fold account, *Tim.* had an infirm, weak Body, and ſuch ſickly people uſually incline more to minde a Winding-ſheet than wanton Luſts.

Tim. was a holy young Man, very temperate, for the moſt part drinking only Water; and ſuch cold Liquor was more likely to quench, than inflame the heat of Luſts: and yet becauſe *Tim.* was a young Man, *Paul* ſaw need to give him this admonition. Well then may you young people need it: Beſure it is written for your admonition in theſe laſt and leude days, on whom the end of the World are come: Wherefore attend thereunto as for your lives. *Flee youthful luſts.* In which words there is no need of any Logical diviſion, to detain you from this following Theological

ological propoſition, which (without the leaſt violence done to the Text) naturally floweth from it.

That it is a duty of ſpecial concernment, to young people, to flee youthful luſts. In the proſecution of this Doctrine, I ſhall endeavour the reſolution of theſe following Queſtions.

Q. 1. *What is the import of the word Flee?*
Q. 2. *What are thoſe Youthful Luſts that you are ſo concerned to flee?*
Q. 3. *Why it as a duty of ſuch ſpecial concernment for Youth to flee thoſe luſts?*

Q. 4. *How young people may beſt Practice this their eſpecial duty to flee youthful luſts?*

Q. 1. *What is the import of this word Flee?*

Anſw. Now to Flee imports the ſwifteſt motion, as to run is more than to go, ſo to flee is more then to run; Wings are nimbler than Legs. You know in all motion, there is *terminus a quo, & terminus ad quem,* the terms from which, and the terms to which So it is here flee from ſin to God. Flee *i. e.* to the fartheſt diſtance from ſin, and to the neareſt cloſure and union to God, 11. *Job* 14. *If iniquity be in thy hand put it far away,* How far? ſo far as God puts it away when he pardons ſin, even as far as the Eaſt is from the Weſt, 103. *Pſal.* 12 So ſhould you do in your Repentance for ſin.

Object

Object. But we can as ſoon, flee from our ſelves, as from our Luſts, in this ſenſe: the Law in our Members will abide.

Sol. Altho there cannot be in this life a perfect freedom from, nor deſtruction of ſins, Being an exiſtence, (this being only the priveledge of the glorified Souls above) yet there may and muſt be a ſubverſion of its Power and Dominion, both in Heart and Life; ſo that the meaning is *flee from thy youthful luſts to the utmoſt diſtance, even as far as the Eaſt is from the Weſt*, in reſpect of thy love, and affection to, and practice of theſe luſts: Tho ſin is and will remain in thee, yet maintain a continual alienation in thy heart and endeavours in thy life againſt it, in a diligent uſe of all thoſe ſanctified means, and ſpiritual remedies which God hath appointed for the abandoning thy youthful luſts. Such as theſe following.

1. Vehement deſires and longings of ſoul after the mortification of them in their habits as well as external acts. 7. *Rom.* 24.

2. Deep humblings of ſoul, and loathings of ſelf, for former yieldings to thy Luſts, 73. *Pſal.* 22. *So fooliſh and ignorant was I even as a Beaſt before thee.* 31. *Jer.* 18 *I have ſurely*

ſurely heard Ephraim bemoning himſelf thus, I was as a Bullock unaccuſtomed to the yoke. Surely after I was inſtructed, I ſmote upon my thigh, I repented; I was aſhamed, yea, even confounded, becauſe I did bear the reproach of my youth.

3. Earneſt cries to Heaven for Preventing, pardoning, and purging Grace. 19. *Pſal.* 13. *Keep back thy Servant from preſumptuous ſins; let them not have dominion over me.* 51. Pſal. 1. 2, 7, 10. verſes, *Have mercy upon me, O God, according to the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my tranſgreſſions, Waſh me throughly from mine iniquities, and cleanſe me from my ſin. Purge me, and I ſhall be clean; create in me a clean heart O God.*

4. Fixed reſolutions in Chriſts ſtrength to obey your Youthful Luſts no more. 14. *Hoſea* 8. *Ephraim ſhall ſay, what have I any more to do with Idols?* 34. Job 32. *Lord what I know not, teach thou me, and wherein I have done iniquity, I will do ſo no more.*

5. Lively acting of faith on a crucified Chriſt, and the precious promiſes. 6 *Rom.* 6. *Knowing this that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of ſin might be deſtroyed; that hence forth we ſhould not ſerve ſin.* 2 Cor. 7. 1. *Having therefore theſe promiſes, (dearly beloved) let us cleanſe our ſelves from all filthineſs of the fleſh and ſpirit.*

6. Daily watchings againſt all occaſions of drawing out your youthful Luſt and Corruption. 31. *Job.* 1. *I have made a Covenant with my eyes, that I will not look upon a Maid.* 18. Pſal. 23. *I have kept my ſelf from mine own iniquity*, and you may rank under this head that in 13. *Rom.* 13. of making no proviſion for the fleſh, to fulfil it in its luſts.

7. And *Laſtly*, Willingneſs to receive a Chriſtian and Friendly reproof, for your youthful ſins, and follies. 141. *Pſal.* 5. *Let the righteous ſmite me, it ſhall be a kindneſs: and let him reprove me, it ſhall be an excellent oyle, which ſhall not break my head.* Now when you carefully uſe theſe, and ſuch like-means, which God in his holy word hath appointed: then you comport with this excellent Rule, *Flee Youthful Luſts*, and ſo you have the import of that Phraſe, *Flee*, which will further receive an acceſſion of light, if you read with it thoſe other Scriptures, where the word Flee is uſed in a good ſenſe. I ſhall only allude to them.

Flee youthful luſts, as *Lot* fled out of *Sodom.* 19. Gen. 17. *Flee for thy life, look not behind thee, ſtay not thou in the plain: eſcape to the mountain, leaſt thou be conſumed.* Flee Young man thy Luſts, as *Joſeph* fled from his tempting Miſtreſs. 39. *Gen.* 12. *And ſhe caught him by his garment, ſaying lye with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and*

and got him out. Flee as *Jaocb* fled from the face of his bloody Brother *Esau.* 35. Gen. 1. Flee as the poor distressed Manslayer, fled from the avenger of Blood, to the City of refuge. 19. *Deut.* 5. And thus I have endeavoured the Resolution of the first Question, what the import of the word Flee is?

Q. 2. What are those youthful lusts, that you are so concerned to Flee?

Ans. *In the Division of our lives, there are peculiar, and predominant lusts, incident to each division: Now in the general, Youth is obnoxious to most sins, yet some more than others. Youth hath its proper sins, that hange about, that haunt, and dog that season of life; some whereof respect the temper of their minds, and others the frame of their lives, which I shall give you in these following Heads.*

1. Aireness of Spirit, levity of Mind, vanity of thoughts.

2. Blind Boldness in adventuring on desperately in dangerous ways.

3. Careless incogitancy, and inconsiderateness about the most awful important matters of their Souls.

4. Delaying Repentance, and turning to God, foolishly thinking it's time enough, they are yet young.

5. Eager pursuits after sensual Pleasures, Games, *&c.* Loving these more then God.

6. Flexibility to temptations, as dry Tinder to receive the least sparke, easily enticed.

7. Going down the Stream, and follow-

ing a multitude to do Evil; saying I do but as other young people do.

8. Hating Instructions, Admonition and Reproof.

9. Intemperance in meats, and Drinks.

10. Keeping of ill Company, that Soul runining snare of Hell.

11. Lying and inventing Excuses.

12. Making little or no Conscience of relative Duties.

13. Nourishing vain hopes, and flattering themselves with the thoughts of long Life, and puting far away the evil Day.

14. Omitting the holy Observation of the Sabbath.

15. Pride of their parts, Beauty, Strength.

16. Quenching the motions of the Holy Spirit.

17. Ridiculing serious Religion, as too strict, and more than needs.

18. Time-wasting.

19. Uncleanness.

20. Woful giddiness of Spirit, ready to imbibe any kinde of error. To begin with the first of these.

1. *Aireness of Spirit*, &c. It is observable what name the *Hebrews* give a young Man, (*viz.*) *Nagnar*, which cometh from a root, that signifieth to be tossed to and fro: Thereby setting forth the Levity, and Vanity of a young Man's mind. *Solomon* tells us in the 10. *Eccl.* 11. that Childhood and Youth

Youth are Vanity, light Spirited and Frothy. O how rare a ſight is it to ſee young people ſerious and ſtaid in their minds. Ballaſted, and Ballanced in the matters of Religion. Moſt are as the Apoſtle ſaith of them, toſſed eaſily to and fro with every Wind: tho they are born with ſinful corrupted Natures, and are every moment liable to Death and Damnation, while they continue in a natural condition: yet they are like the wild Aſs in the Wilderneſs, that ſnuffeth up the Wind at her pleaſure, as the Prophet *Jeremiah* ſpeaks: 2. *Jer.* 24. They are become vain in their imagination, their minds are like that of the Poets, full of vain fancies, and fictions: the Eye of their minds like that of their Body, looks all outward, as if they had no Soul to mind. Hence it is that ſo many thouſands of Prayers, Tears, and Inſtructions of faithful Miniſters and Relations are defeated, and rendred unſucceſsful, through the Inſtability and Vanity of young peoples ſpirits.

B. *Boiſtrous, and Bold, adventuring upon ſinful, and pernicious Courſes*; Of a *Jehu* like temper, 2 *Kings* 9. 10. Furious, and Deſperate: This is that young people are prone to, in the heat of their Youth, to be venturous, as the Horſe that ruſheth into the Battle. Now if you would ſee how the Horſe ruſheth into the Battle, compare with that 8. *Jer.* 6. the 39. *Job.* 19. and there you have it

Now

moſt elegantly, and lively expreſſed by God himſelf. *Haſt thou given the Horſe ſtrength? haſt thou cloathed his neck with thunder? Canſt thou make him afraid as a Graſhopper? his noſtrils are terrible. He paweth in the valley, and rejoyceth in his ſtrength: he goeth on to meet the armed men. He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted, neither turneth he back from the Sword. The quiver ratleth againſt him*: he ſwalloweth the ground with fierceneſs, he ſaith among the Trumpets, ha, ha; in which diſcription, you may ſee how furiouſly and dangerouſly he ruſheth into the Battle for he ruſheth upon the Pikes, and deadly Inſtruments, prepared for deſtruction, and ottimes is ſuddenly ſlain. Thus young people are apt, to ruſh on in ſinful ways, *Furioſus juvenibus animi habitus.* Tho God hedge in their way with Thorns, they break through all; as *Balaam* would on, tho there was a drawn Sword in the way. So Youth is prone to this mad fury, in venturing on, tho God hath laid many bars in ſins way, as Majeſtracy, Miniſtry, Conſcience, and the occular demonſtrations of his Judgments upon other impenitent ſinners; theſe are all bars in their way, yet how rare is it, to ſee young ones reſtrained, and kept back, by any, by all of them. You have an inſtance, in *Eli*'s Sons, 1 *Sam.* 2. and for this cauſe in the 12 *verſe*, they are called children of *Belial*, becauſe no Yoke would

would hold them: Alſo you read of two of *Jacobs* Sons, *Simeon* and *Levi*, of whoſe miſcarriages of this kind the good old man thus expreſſeth himſelf, in the 49. *Gen.* 5. 6, 7. *Simeon* and *Levi* are Brethren, inſtruments of Cruelty are in their Habitations. O my Soul come not thou into their Secret; unto their Aſſembly, mine Honour be not thou united, for in their anger they Slew a man, and in their ſelf will they digged down a Wall. Curſed be their Anger, for it was fierce, and their Wrath, for it was Cruel: It is to be obſerved, that the greater number of thoſe Malefactors that end their miſerable lives at *Tiburn*, are the younger ſort of people, their boiſterous luſts conſume them, that they ſcares live out half their days.

C. *Careleſs incogitancy, and want of ſerious conſideration*, and laying to heart the moſt awful important matters of their Souls. There are three things (ſaith a great Writer) that are chief ruiners, and deſtroyers of Souls. Namely, 1. want of conſideration, and ſelf reflexion. 2. Infidelity, 3. Earthly mindedneſs; but eſpecially want of conſideration. The firſt of theſe, which Youth are exceeding guilty of: How ſeldom do young people retire, and ſoberly inquire, what their State and Condition God wards is? whether it be a ſtate of Nature or Grace? whether God be reconciled, and ſin pardoned, *&c.* Alas, young people are generally

nerally led by ſenſe, extending their thoughts no further, than juſt what is before them, though they live, and move, and have their Being in God: are always under his all-ſeeing Eye; yet he is not all their thoughts, tho he will bring them to Judgment, for all they do, yet they think not of it: This evidently appears in the advice the Holy Ghoſt giveth young ones: in the 11. of *Eccleſ.* 9. its true, all men naturally are inconſiderate about theſe things; but young ones are averſe to the thoughts of God, their Soul, Death and Judgment: becauſe the remembrance of theſe things, would damp their youthful ſenſual Delights, and Pleaſures, and adminiſter trouble to their minds, againſt which that age of life hath an irreconcileable enmity; and hence it is, that the vanities, and fooleries of this world, outway Chriſt, Heaven, and eternal Life. O did young ones but ſeriouſly conſider, and bend their thoughts cloſe to theſe rouzing Doctrines and truth, as they are repreſented in the word of God: Their undone ſtate by Nature, and the peril of Hell and Damnation, they are in each moment, whilſt they delay Converſion, and flying for refuge to a crucified Jeſus; ſurely it would render the temptations of fleſhly pleaſures, *jejune*, and vain, and prove an excellent means to awaken them to Repentance, ere the day of Gods Patience be ended: which brings me to the

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fourth & next ſin young people are prone to.

4. *Delaying of Religion*, ſaying, They are yet young, and its time enough, though young People are often told, how much more dubious, and difficult their Repentance, and turning to God will be hereafter, then now, ſuppoſing their Lives ſhould be continued to them. Yet (without the breach of Charity) one may ſay, ſcarce one of many Hundreds, but delay and neglect a preſent complyance with thoſe repeated Calls of God to Converſion; when, in the mean time, their Youthful Luſts, their Games, and Sports, call them, and find a quick and ready Attendance, and Cloſure. *David's* great Care was to ſet about the Work of Religion, while he was under the firſt, and early calls thereunto, 119 *Pſal.* 60 I made haſte, and delayed not to keep thy Commandments. But how rare is it to ſee, young Perſons (whom the Devil lays Siege to, endeavouring to perſwade them that it is time enough, when they are older, to ſteep their thoughts in ſuch a melancholly Subject as Religion is) to follow his example.

5. *Eager purſuits after Pleaſures*, Loving them more than God. Pleaſure is that which ſtrangely carries it with the younger ſort of People, (*Modo Potiar*) ſaith the younger, let me have Pleaſure now, whatever come on't: as *Eſau* parts with his Birthright, for a meſs of red Potage: ſo young ones

ones are ready to part with Heaven for the pleaſures of Sin, that are but for a ſeaſon; they are joyned to pleaſure, as *Ephraim* was to Idols; and O how difficult a taske is it, to force a divorce between them: Shall I be cloiſtred up, and manacled in the days of my Youth, by the ſeverities of Repentance, and Selfdenial, this is to bid me be no more *Naomi*; but *Marah*? Thus the young man pleads, like the Figtree and Olivetree you read of in the 9. of *Judges* and the 9. Should I leave my fatneſs, and my ſweetneſs, *&c.* ſo ſhould I leave my youthful Pleaſures to march with Sighs, Groans, Tears, and a ſtrict courſe of mortification? No, no, ile rather rejoyce in the days of my Youth, ere the days come wherein I can have no Pleaſure: Thus Youth are prone (like the Bee that hovers about the Pot of Honey, untill at length it is drowned in it) to hanker after, yea, madly to run full breaſt upon Pleaſure, untill like a dart it ſtrikes into their very Liver. Their minds are perpetually drunk with the love of Pleaſure, till they fall down Dead.

F. *Flexibility to Temptation*, as dry Tinder to the leaſt ſpark, hence you read in the *Proverbs*, frequently of the young Mans being eaſily enticed and drawn away, *Chap.* 7. from the 7 *Verſe* to the 23. *And I beheld among the ſimple Ones; I diſcerned among the Youths, a young Man void of Underſtanding, and he went*

the way to the Harlots Houſe, &c. Verſe 21. *With her fair Speech ſhe cauſed him to yield, and he goeth after her ſtraightway, as an Ox goeth to the Slaughter*, &c. hence in the 1*ſt. Chap.* 10. you Read, *My Son, if Sinners entice thee, conſent thou not*, &c. intimating, that *impetous* or vigorous Inclination & Byaſs that is in Youth to conſent to Temptations; young ones are eaſily drawn by the ſmalleſt Temptations; they are ready to meet it half way, yea, to outgo it. *Iſa.* 5. 18. We read of ſome that will Tranſgreſs for a piece of Bread. 28. *Prov.* 21. *Ahab* ſold himſelf to work Wickedneſs. *Judas* offered himſelf to ſell Chriſt. and *Ephraim* willingly walked after the Commandment of Falſe Worſhip. 5. *Hoſea* 11. Thus young People are preſently perſwaded, the leaſt Motion is bait and hire enough; like ſoft Wax they readily receive the ſtamp of a Temptation.

G. *Going down the Stream, and following the Multitude to do Evil*, excuſing all with this, Namely, That there are Thouſands, and Millions, that ſteer the Courſe, and tread the Paths that I do; *ducimur exemplis*. If Miniſters give warning from God to avoid, and flee ſuch and ſuch youthful Sins, and cry out as the Angel to *Lot*, Haſte, eſcape for thy life, *cito, citius citiſſime*: Preſently in ſome ſuch plauſible manner as this they reply, If I never do worſe, I hope I ſhall do well enough, have not others done the ſame or as bad? I

have

have the Examples of Thouſands, a multitude on my ſide, both of Superiors, Equals, and Interiours. O the unſpeakable deal of Poyſon that is thus conveyed in the hearts of young Perſons; and the innumerable Souls that go to Hell by Pattern! How many Children have learned to Lye, Swear, break the Sabbath, and deride the Godly, from their Graceleſs Fathers and Mothers, who have herein been ſpecial Factors for the Devil and Hell.

8. *Hating Inſtruction, and Admonition, and Reproof.* This is another Sin that Youth are guilty of. 5 *Proverbs* 11, 12. There you have the Rebellious Youth brought in under ſtrong Impreſſions of the Terrors of the Lord for this very Sin. And thou Mourn at the laſt and ſay, *How have I hated Inſtruction, and would not obey the Voice of my Teachers.* O how many ſad Witneſſes have we had of this at *Tyburne.* Hence it is that we find Godly Parents oft times abounding in Tears, wringing their Hands, ſmiting their Breaſts, and crying out, *O nothing will work upon my Child Thouſands of times have I prayed, wept, warned, and after all as ſtubborn and diſobedient as before!* Alas, there is a ſecret loathing of good Councel in Youth, *Monitoribus Aſper.* Young Men love to conſult with Fleſh and Blood and to walk after the Imaginations of their own Hearts, but they hate to comply with the Sage and Serious Inſtructions of Religion.

9. In

9. Intemperance in Meats and Drinks, which stands in a voluntary eating and drinking to excess, for the pleasing the Appetite; this is not so much the Temptation of old and sickly People, as of our youth, to pamper, and glut their vile Bodies; as if God had made them a kind of upright Bruits, that need not stoop down to a Trough, or in resemblance of a Spring, or a Hogshead that are of little use, save to contain Liquor. *Alexandrinus* calleth this Sin the Throat-Devil, and the Belly-Devil. And too true is it, that the Devil destroyeth Multitudes of Youth by this Sin, who for the pleasing of their Throats will sell him their Souls, as *Esau* his Birthright, for his Belly: O this Canine, Eager, and Insatiable Appetite; where it Rules, it Ruins all. Physicians say, That of those who out-live their Childhood, scarce one of many that dye in their Prime, but by Intemperance; for generally in the younger sort, Religion and Reason are weakest, and but underlings to their unruly Appetites, and when once this outragious Lust has got the Ascendant, and Regal Power, a blazing Star burning in the Heavens, is not so fatally ominous of Ruine, as this. *Seneca* saith, *Epulo est Parochianus Diabolo.* An Epicure is a Parishioner to the Devil; who then can sufficiently lament that Innundation of Epicurism, Gluttony and Drunkenness that hath ever-run the Youth of this Nation? Ah,

 who

who can refrain Tears? To see how many born of pious Progenitors, and bred up in Religious Families; again, How many born of Gruth Blood, descended from Honourable Ancestors, and bred up at the Feet of *Gamaliel* at the Schools, and of pregnant Capacities, and who might have been peculiar Blessings to the Land; I say to see these (as well as others that are brought forth in a lower Station, and brought up in a viler and a more irreligious way) to Sacrifice their Youthful days to *Bacchus*, the God of Wine, and emasculate their Spirits in Taverns, and Drunken Societies. We read in 1 *Pet.* 4. 3 of those who *walked in Lasciviousness, Lusts, excess of Wine, Revellings, Banquetings wherein they think strange, that you run not with them to the same excess of Riot, speaking evil of you.* I need not search into the Riotous Practice of other Nations, nor lay my Scene abroad to make Application of this Text: Alas, it holds too true of us in this Nation, who reckon that they have not made their Guests welcom, if they have not made them Drunk, and deem it as a piece of incivility and rudeness, that deserves a stab if you will not go on to pledge them in the Hellish Health to their Wits end. Good Lord! that ever any that breaths within the *English* Air, and that names the name of Christ, should commence such Wickedness! Oh that our Head were Waters, *&c.*

10. An-

10. Another Sin that youth is prone to, is keeping ill Company, that Soul ruining ſnare of Satan's, which hath ſlain its thouſands, as being the foundation and inlet to all manner of wickedneſs. O how many hopeful young ones have been ſpoiled in the very bud, by the infectious influences of vile Company; whence is that advice of the Wiſe-man's in the 1ſt. of *Prov.* 10. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. *My Son if ſinners entice thee, conſent thou not*, walk not thou in the way with them, refrain thy feet from their Path. What *Solomon* ſaith elſewhere of the ſteps of the ſtrange Woman, we may ſay of the ſteps of wicked company, they take hold of Hell, it is a new link in the Chain that faſteneth damnation to you, it is like tying a Milſtone about your necks, that will pull you both Soul and Body into the bottom of the Sea of Gods Wrath, from whence there is no recovery. O young ones, you will find it one of the hardeſt things that is, when once you are engag'd in evil Company, to diſenthral your ſelves again: little do you know where it will lead you, it will inſenſibly harden you and bring you to a reprobate mind, it will *vaſtare conſcientiam*, lay waſt your Conſciences, and ſo ſeat you in the Chair of the Scorners; and then the next ſtep is Hell. Ah! how many young ones, when firſt they have engaged in evil company, and ſet out with them, have been

a little ſtartled and affrighted at their interlocutory Oathes (for *nemo repente fit turpiſſimus*) as *Juven.* ſpeaks: yet after a while frequenting ſuch company they find themſelves almoſt irrecoverably ingulfed into thoſe prodigious ſins, that themſelves could not have believed they ſhould ever adventured on; ſuch an Emblem of Hell is ill company, that (without the breach of Charity) one may ſay that none continue in the one while they live, but inevitably fall into the other when they dye, and ſo their ſteps take hold of Hell, where the worm dyeth not, and fire is not quenched; where their fellowſhp in ſin will be turned into a miſerable fellowſhip of flames, where an holy and juſt God will do that, *viz.* damn them, which they in their merry meeting have ſo often called upon him to do; and the Devil will take that, *viz.* their Souls, which they have ſo freely and frequently given him.

11. Another ſin whereunto youth are much addicted, is Lying, a ſin that ſeemeth to be contemporary with ſpeech in young Children; that as ſoon as their earthly Parents teach them to ſpeak, their helliſh father the Devil, learns them to lye; that as ſoon as the one learns them to go on Earth, the other learns them to go to Hell, hence theſe two are joyn'd together, in that 58. *Pſal.* 3. Speaking of young ones,

ones, they go aſtray from the Womb telling lies. This is a ſin, that all, but eſpecially young ones are exceedingly prone to, whereby Satan leads them captive at his will, to make them his Vaſſals: Look there young people! there are ſeveral ſins that are (as I may ſay) the very off-ſpring and Progeny of Satan, and in acting of them, a ſinner reſembles the Devil, as a Child the Father: For inſtance, Pride, it's called their condemnation of the Devil, 1 *Tim.* 3. 6. an angry paſſionate ſpirit it's ſtiled giving place to the Devil, 4. *Eph.* 26, 27. the like one may ſay of this ſin of Lying, in the 8. *John*, and the cloſe of the 44. *v.* the Devil is called a lyer, and the Father of Lies, and in the 5. of the *Acts* 3. Satan is there ſaid to fill *Ananias* his heart to lie againſt God, which ſheweth that where there is a lie in the Tongue, there is the Devil filling of the Heart, ruling in Children of diſobedience; hence *James* ſaith 4. chap. and the 6. *v.* that it ſets all on fire of Hell. O how great is the power that Satan acquireth in young people by this ſin, it gives him that which he ſo earneſtly deſires; namely, a ſpiritual poſſeſſion of Souls, as a man poſſeſſeth and dwells in his Houſe, and there it is he learneth young ones that maſter-piece in the Black Art, to call Evil Good, and Good Evil, and to deny the fact when they have committed ſin,

as 2 *Kings* 5. 25. thy Servant (ſaid lying *Gehazi*) went no whether; thus *Jacobs* Sons, after they had wickedly ſold their Brother, come with a plauſible Tale (tho a palpable lye) to their Father, we found this bloody Garment in the Field, but whoſe it is we know not, 37. *Gen.* 32.

12. Another Sin, young ones are given to, is neglect of Relative duties, as honouring and obeying their Parents and Maſters, *&c.* this is a ſin peculiar to young people, and there are but few that eſcape the guilt of it. Hence have Miniſters Eccleſiaſtical Fathers, almoſt every Lords-day Bills of complaint, like *Ezekiels* Roll, filled with lamentation, put into our hands, begging our earneſt Prayers for rebellious and diſobedient Children and Servants: Though the juſtice of God is ordinarily manifeſt in the execution of his threatned Judgments upon Children of *Belial* even in this Life: yet alas, how ſeldom do young people take and improve ſuch awful, awakening warnings, to hear and fear and do no more ſo wickedly? How common is it for Children, yea, when grown up, and their Parents grown old, to ſet light by them, and to ſpeak Sawcily and Contemptuouſly of them, and to them, behaving themſelves proudly, and rudely before them, as if they were their equals; a practice moſt vile againſt the light of Nature, and always (according,

cording to the Scripture) entaileth a Curſe upon ſuch unnatural Children, 27. *Deut.* 16. *Curſed be he that ſetteth light by his Father or his Mother: and all the people ſhall ſay, Amen.* The puniſhment that the Heathens inflicted on ſuch, was, to ſew them in a Sack with a Dog, Cat, Viper and Ape, (an Emblem of unnaturalneſs) and ſo drown them together, and the puniſhment that the Law of God in the time of *Moſes* did aſſign to a rebellious Son, was to be ſtoned to Death: 21. *Deut.* 18. If a man have a ſtubborn and rebellious Son, which will not obey the voice of his Father, or the voice of his Mother, then ſhall they lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the Elders of the City, and all the men of the City ſhall ſtone him with ſtones till he dye. And it is obſervable, now under the Goſpel, how the holy and wiſe Povidence of God ordinarily ſets a mark upon diſobedient Children, either in imbittering their lives with a ſucceſſion of miſeries and vexations here, or ſuffering them to fall by an untimely Death.

13. Another Sin Youth is prone to, is Sabbath breaking; a day which uſually young people meet together upon, to walk abroad in the Fields, and take their pleaſure, and run into all exceſs of Riot, Chambering, acting their filthy luſts, drinking Healths, playing at Cards, Dancing, Swear-

ing, and ſometimes Quarrelling, Fighting, Thieving, Robbing of Orchards and Gardens, and thus inverting that Day which God hath ſanctified, and appropriated to his own Honour and Service, and the ſaving of ſouls; to the ſervice of the Devil, and damning their own ſouls; ſure I am the whole Chriſtian world at this day groans under the tragical and bitter effects of this ſin, and he is nothing worthy of Eyes that weeps not to ſee whole droves running headlong to Hell through this breach, *viz.* the Breach of the Sabbath. Verily the Devil hath more ſervice done on this day than on all the ſix beſides, and how deplorable is the ſerious conſideration hereof, that the day which ſhould be Chriſt's, is the Devil's great harveſt of Souls, and that day which ſhould make joy in Heaven, by an addition to the Church, of ſuch as ſhall be ſaved, ſhould ever prove Satans triumph, and Hells inlarging it ſelf beyond Meaſure, at the acceſſion of ſo vaſt a multitude of Sabbath-breakers into it.

14. Another ſin that Youth is exceedingly prone to, is nouriſhing of vain hope, and flattering themſelves with the thought of long life, putting far away from them the memorial of the evil Day. Young people account it, a kind of death to think of Death; the meditations, or tydings of it, are (like thoſe of the Judges coming to the Bench,

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to Malefactors) entertained with great reluctancy; and when they cannot wholly baniſh the items of it, out of their Conſciences, they will be ſure to ſet it a great way off: as thoſe bold ſinners did the Prophets Viſion, in the 12. of *Ezek.* 27. the Viſion that he ſees, is for many days to come, and hence as that evil Servant, in the 24. *Mat.* 48. when he ſaith in his heart, my Lord delayeth his coming, he began to ſmite his fellow Servant, and to eat, and drink with the drunken; ſo young people, when they once drive off the thoughts of death, as far as they can from day to day, then they run a whoring from God, lay aſide Religious duties, let looſe the reins of their Luſts, laugh at the tremendous threatnings of the Almighty. It is one of the greateſt ſtrengthners of temptations to Luxury, Pride, and almoſt every ſin in the World, when ſinners are bold, to promiſe themſelves many years to come, as you may ſee in that 12. *Luke* 17, 18, 19. where our Saviour brings in that fooliſh rich man ſpeaking to his ſoul, after this manner, *Soul take thine eaſe, eat, drink, be merry, thou haſt goods laid up for many years.* O young men, as you would eſcape the rebukes an angry God, and an exaſperated guilty Conſcience, promiſe not your ſelves long life, it is the ready way to Atheiſm and Apoſtacy: whereas if you would always keep

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the eye of your mind open, to behold the ſpeedy approach of Death, and Judgment, as in *rem preſentem*, how admirably would it work, how ſerious in caſting up your ſouls accounts, and imploring of pardon and eternal Life would you be.

15. Another of theſe youthful ſins is Pride, and vain Glory, which ſtands in an overvaluing of our ſelves, with reference to the endowments of the Mind, or Body; ſuch as Wit, Parts, Beauty, Stature, Strength, Agility, *&c.* Young ones have much darkneſs, and ignorance both of God, and themſelves; and hence they ſet themſelves as among the Stars in their own thoughts: if they have Parts, how prone are they to be proud of them, conceiting themſelves to have much more than indeed they have, and then above meaſure, admiring their own Wit, and ſtrength of parts, and expecting every one elſe ſhould admire them too, not conſidering that theſe mental gifts, without Grace, makes them more like the Devil, that abounds with endowments of this kind, and to be more ſerviceable to him (as malignant inſtrumentals) in promoting the ruin of mens ſouls; as *Auſtin* told a great, but unſanctified Scholar, *ornari a te diabolus quærit*, the Devil ſeeks to be honoured, and ſerved by thee: And you read in 3. *Gen.* 1. Becauſe the Serpent was more ſubtile than any other beaſt,

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the Devil uſed that Creature to deſtroy mankind. Now this Pride of Intellectuals, is never more dangerous, than when it terminates upon Religion, and Souls affairs; and there are none more obnoxious hereunto, than young people, a little knowledge maketh them think they are fit to be Preachers preſently: whereas the old, and experienced Chriſtian, with trembling cryeth out, Lord, who is ſufficient for theſe things. Young ones, for want of acquaintance with, and experience of the wickedneſs, and deceitfulneſs of their own hearts, are apt to think that they have abundance of Grace; *Paul*, a young man, was highly conceited of his good eſtate in Religion and ſpiritual matters, till the commandment came in the power of it, and revived in him a ſight and ſenſe of his curſed and ſinful eſtate by nature. 7. *Rom.* 9. And ſo the young man in the Goſpel according to *Matth.* 19. chap. 20. *All theſe have I done, what lack I yet.* O young man remember, this ſpiritual Pride, is like the flye in the pot of Oyntment, make all to ſtink, if you over-value your ſelves in matters of Religion, you may ſoon undo your ſelves, and fall into the ſnare, and condemnation of the Devil. This was the reaſon why *Paul* forbids the chooſing of a young beginner in Religion to the work of the Miniſtry: Not a Novice, leſt he

ſhould be lifted up with Pride. 1 *Tim.* 3. 6. *Paul* was a wiſe man, he well knew the ſubtilties of Satan, and the want of experience, in young ones, would ſoon inſnare them, and betray them into the hands of this ſin. And then with reſpect to Pride in bodily endowments, as Beauty, Strength, Stature, *&c.* Alas, how is the Youth of the preſent Age grown monſtrous herein? Never did Pride ride in ſuch ſtate, when it went abroad in the Streets of *Sodom*, as at this day it doth in this Nation, wherein I was born, and in this City wherein I now breathe. Alas, what wandering eyes, wanton dreſſes, fooliſh faſhions, apiſh imitations, extravagant waſhings, profane patching, in a word, a practical devotedneſs to the vile Body, that is but a fine skin full of filth, Flegm, Choler and Corruption, abounds in this City: O the Arts, Studies, Pains, among us all for the neatifying, priding, pampering this piece of earth, that e're long will be meat for the Worms. O young people, what will a white skin, or ſtrength of Limbs, or a roſie Complexion ſignifie, when God rebuketh man for ſin, his beauty will conſume as a Moth. 39. *Pſal.* 11. One fit of an Ague can alter thy beauty, or a viſitation with the Small Pox, can change it into its contrary.

16. Another ſin Youth is ordinarily prone to is quenching and ſtifling the holy motions of

of Gods Spirit: This more eſpecially they are liable to, that are the ſeed of the Righteous, and that dwell among thoſe, whoſe chief ſcope and aim is to promote your Converſion by their daily Prayers, Inſtructions, and holy examples. Such young ones, as are thus educated in righteous Families, and uſed to a conſtant attendance (through the care of their godly Parents or Maſters) on the means of Grace, both publick and private; they do meet with innumerable inward motions of the ſpirit of God, ſtriving in, and with them, they lie more obvious to the Lords grace; and I am perſwaded that there is not one to be found among theſe, that are come to years of underſtanding, but what muſt own the truth of this. But oh, the woful oppoſition, that is commonly made by young ones againſt theſe holy ſuggeſtions, and illapſes of the bleſſed ſpirit; they are uſually like the ſparks falling into a Sea of water: when they are at a Sermon, how many knocks, and ſecret jogs, touches of Heart, and Conſcience, do they meet with, to conſider ſoberly about their ſpiritual and everlaſting ſtate. But what through the ſubtilty of Satan and the love of fooliſh mirth, and pleaſures, and vain company, &c. preſently as ſoon as they return they loſe all, quench thoſe begun convictions, and juſt were it if the abuſed ſpirit ſhould depart

depart for ever and ſtrive no more. Be aſſured young people, you cannot ſin, at ſo cheap a rate, as an old ſinner, that never had the heavenly gales, breathings, operations, motions to converſion, interruptions, and checks in ſinful courſes, as you have had. O it is this that accents Goſpel condemnation, *that light is come, and men love darkneſs rather than light.* 3. *John* 19. When becauſe light reproves, gauls the ſinner, therefore it is hated, this is dreadful indeed. O ponder a while what an infinite mercy of God, it is to your poor miſerable ſouls, to have the ſtrivings and negotiatings of the holy ſpirit of God. 147. *Pſal.* 19. he hath not dealt ſo with all of your ranks, and ſtanding: How many thouſands are let alone, like young *Dagons*? now to reſiſt theſe, and to ſin againſt the light, argueth ſuch a love to ſin, and averſation to God, as juſtly may place you in the forefront of deſperate ſinners.

17. The next ſin Youth are prone to, is Atheiſm, *&c.* ridiculing ſerious Religion. The holy Apoſtle diſtinctly foretold, by a ſpirit of Propheſie, this very ſin, in the 2 *Peter* 3. 3, 4. *knowing this firſt, that there ſhall come in the laſt days ſcoffers, walking after their own luſts, and ſaying, where is the promiſe of his coming*; ſurely theſe are thoſe laſt days, wherein we live; and never did this ſin of Atheiſm, and deriding at goodneſs, obtain

obtain such a vogue, till of late, in this irreligious Age; wherein the main Articles of the Christian Faith are shaken in the minds of multitudes of young people. Satan hath corrupted the minds of many, and diffused his venemous influence, not only through the Pagan and Papal, but also through the Protestant and Reformed world too. O! what a world of infidelity, and Atheism is to be found in our Cities, and Countries, and would to God our Churches were free: but if we compare the lives of abundance of Professors, with their pretended Creed, really their profession will scarce cover their Hypocrisie, and Atheism; though you should exercise the largest Charity. God, and Christ, the immortality of the Soul, Death, and Judgment, Heaven and Hell, are in their Creed, and they would condemn you for a rank Heretick, if you should deny any of these Doctrines; But a little observation of their sensual lives will soon acquaint you with their vile and odious Hypocrisie and Atheism; while you behold in their lives, the great God disobeyed, Christ vilified, Heaven condemned, and the Worlds vanities preferred before it, Hell ventured upon for the sake of a pleasing sin. And among us there are a generation of young Wits sprang up, that (that albeit they have had baptismal Water on their face, yet) arrived to that highth of sin, as

to tell the world, not only in their works but also in words, that Religion is a meer fancy, nothing but the melancholly imagination of some poor spirited men, that foolishly and fondly conceit of such a thing as God lives, and of a Heaven prepared for those that have it, and Hell for those that want it, and then they scare, and affright themselves with those buggbears, that their own fancies represent. And thus as the judicious *Gurnal* sadly observes, (*p.* 298.) *Some among us have dared to make it their boast, and glorying, that they have at last got from under the burthen of that Tyrant Conscience, they can Swear and Drink, Whore, and what not, without any check, or remorse.* Time was when they were under the wing of their Parents, that they trembled at the hearing of such guilt: But now entring into those Atheistical Clubs, and imbibing their principles, their Consciences are become silent, after they have been duck't so often for scolding, that they are Sermon poof, and laugh at the Notion of Damnation; and at Ministers, who in the name of God threaten impenitent sinners with it, and look upon them, as the veriest fools, and mad Men in the World; ——but know, that these will prove the worst fools at last, yea, worse by far, than *David's* Fool, *Psal.* 14. 1. *The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God*: That fool durst only whisper it,

it, but these speak it boldly and openly: These declare their Sin as *Sodom*, and hide it not. To go about to confute these Sons of *Belial*, would be a vain thing; we have *Moses* and the Prophets, every Leaf therein is sufficient. But these Sinners deride the Scriptures; and so tho' one should arise from the Dead, and come from Hell with the Flames of that burning Lake about his Ears, and tell them the Torments they endure; neither would they believe. Surely that such a Generation not only of practical, but professed *Atheists* should be found in a Land, that hath enjoyed so much Gospel-light, is a lamentation, and ought to be for a lamentation. I may say as *Jeremiah*, 2.chap. 12.v. *Be astonished, O ye Heavens, at this, and be ye horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the Lord.* Methinks it should make our very Hearts to tremble, when we see such cursed Weeds spring up in such a Garden, that God hath taken such pains withal; he is more than blind that doth not see, and so say, *Stultorum plena sunt omnia.* Master *Greenham* feared rather *Atheism*, than *Popery*, would be *England*'s Ruin. The Lord affect your Heart, and mine with this Abomination of the Day we live in, namely the ridiculing, and deriding the power of Godliness, stiling it nothing but *Fancy*, or *Faction*, *Pride*, or *Singularity*.

18. Another Sin the Youth of this Age, are much given to, is Swearing, Curſing, and taking the Holy and Reverend Name of God in vain. A Sin for which the Land mourns. There are two Kinds of it, both which young people are prone to.

1. Uſing the Name of God unreverently in common talk, at every turn to ſay [*O Lord, O God*, or, *God bleſs me*, or, *take me*] this is taking God's Name in vain; and how many thouſands of little Children, as well as others, are guilty in this kind, almoſt at every word, toſſing that awful and holy Name about in their graceleſs mouths; which a world of Glorious Angels and glorified Spirits are magnifying continually.

2. Horrid prodigious Oaths, not to be named without abhorrency, *Rom.* 3. 13, 14 you read there that *their Throat is an open Sepulchre, the poyſon of Aſps is under their Lips; whoſe Mouth is full of Curſing and Bitterneſs.* And certainly if ever the Youth of a Kingdom, were in danger of that dreadful Curſe of the Almighty, flaming out from the *Mount Ebal* of thoſe Scriptures; the Swearing Youth of this Kingdom is, *Zech.* 5. 2, 3, 4. *And he ſaid unto me, What ſeeſt thou? And I anſwered, I ſee a flying Roll, the length thereof is twenty Cubits, and the breadth thereof two Cubits. Then ſaid he unto me, This is the Curſe that goeth forth over the whole Earth: for every one that ſweareth ſhall be*

cut off according to it. I will bring it forth, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, and it ſhall enter into the Houſe of him that ſweareth falſly by my Name, and it ſhall remain in the middle of his Houſe, and it ſhall conſume it, with the Timber, and Stones thereof. Whence you may note, that ſo long as this Sin remains unrepented of, this Curſe remains and abideth on them, till it bring utter ruin upon them and their whole Eſtate. *Mal.* 3. chap. 5. *And I will come near to you in Judgment, and I will be a ſwift Witneſs againſt the Swearer, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts.* Exodus 20. 7. *The Lord will not hold him guiltleſs, that taketh his Name in vain. Not guiltleſs* (there is a *Meioſis* in thoſe words) that is, the Lord will be ſeverely avenged on ſuch. O the fearful eſtate, of not a few, but multitudes, and whole troops of Children, and young ones, in this Land, in this City, in our Armies, in our Fleets, by reaſon of this Sin! who can number the Perſons, much leſs able are we to number the Oaths, the horrid Imprecations they uſe, that almoſt at every word call to God to Damn them, their Souls, their Blood? Wo to us, the moral Heathen would be aſhamed of us: Is it not time to lament, to ſee a young Generation run with open Mouth upon Ruin, with their Mouth ſet againſt Heaven in Blaſphemies, and ſuch prodigious Vices as haſten their own Damnation, and threaten *England*'s Deſtruction; may not

we justly fear, that the bloody Oaths of the Land of our Nativity, may turn it into an *Aceldama*, i. e. a Field of Blood. In this Sin are wrapped both Parents and Children, Masters and Servants, Officers and common Soldiers, Rich and Poor, and too frequently Ministers with the People, the Buyer, & the Seller. Verily if the Lord, who threatneth to be a swift Witness against the Swearer, should now come among us, with his deserved, as well as threatned Curse, what scudding and crying to the Hills and Mountains to cover us, would there be! A Tree loaded with Boughs is fit for lopping; a Sinner loaded with Oaths, is fit to be hew'n down, & cast into Hell Fire. A Chimney furr'd with Soot, will take fire at last; a Sinner's mouth furr'd with Oaths, will at last, without Repentance, burn him with unquenchable Fire. O how little is this considered by our common Swearers; O young ones take heed of this Sin: young *Joseph* when he was in a Swearing Court, he learn'd to swear the Court-Oath; viz. *by the Life of Pharaoh*, that was his Sin. But alas, in our Age it's become fashionable, and a piece of Gentility to Swear by the *Death, Wounds, Blood of Christ*; Petty Oaths of *Mass, Faith*, and *Troth*, which in former times were most severely condemned by the good old *Puritans*: Now wo to us, we run to the highest form in the Devil's School, and commence Masters of that Black Art of *dam*

me's,

me's, and full-mouth'd Blaſphemies. Yea, and (the Lord be merciful to us) our little Children have learn't it as ſoon as they can ſpeak or waddle about Streets; the ſound whereof, hath often pierced my Heart, with my Ears: the good Lord of Heaven and Earth baniſh it out of our Iſland, or it will (I fear) ſink us. We are encompaſſed about with two Oceans, ſaith one, an Ocean of Waters, and an Ocean of Mercies; And let me add a third, namely an Ocean of Oaths, which if not reformed, will bring a fourth, viz. an Ocean of Miſeries. Some ſay Words are but Wind: it's true; but it is ſuch a Wind as will blow a Soul to Hell, if Grace prevent it not.

19. Another Sin that young people are notoriouſly given to, and guilty of, is Idle, and Sinful ſquandring away their precious time; young People think that they have ſuch a profound, and full ſtock of time to come, that they have enough to ſpare and ſpend profuſely, and while away (as the Countrey Phraſe is) at preſent; and therefore they make little or nothing of laviſhing out Hours and Days. You know perſons will ſpend prodigally out of a full Purſe, who would be very ſparing, if they knew they had but a little, or were like to come to Poverty. Thus Youth fooliſhly fancy that, becauſe ſome have lived to ſee and fulfil 70, or 80 Years, therefore they muſt

do ſo too: and when they have been thus kind to themſelves, in making ſuch a computation of many Years to come; then they turn Prodigals of their time, and caſt it away, as a thing of nought, and with it caſt away all care of their Souls, and loiter out their Morning-Seaſon, at that profuſe rate, as if they were never to be called to account for that, or that God only deſign'd, and aſſign'd the Evening of their Life, that laſt, and worſt part of time, to be redeem'd, and carefully improved, for their better part their precious Souls. But how miſerably cheated are young People herein, as appeareth by thoſe many awakening inſtances, of our Lord's coming to young Ones, in the Morning of their Life, a time, when they leaſt of all looked for him, and then how have they cried out; O precious time! more worth than a World, when it cometh to the laſt Sand at the bottom of the Glaſs: O then what a mercy would they eſteem it, if God would truſt them once again with Time. O young People, think of this the next Temptation to Idleneſs or carnal Eaſe or Pleaſures that returneth, and frown upon it, give it the ſame entertainment, as you would a Thief that comes to kill, or rob you; remember your Souls and Eternity are imbarqued in your youthful Seaſons: and ſurely the conſideration of the worth of your Souls and the aſtoniſhing nature of Eternity, carrieth

rieth force enough to make the extravagant laviſhers of time, to become the moſt thriſty Husbands of it, as one of the moſt precious things in the World. O young Man, thou haſt now a rich Price put into thy hands; doſt thou want a Heart to improve it? Know thou, that ere long thou mayeſt have a Heart, but no price of precious Time in thine Hand. We are fallen into a looſe and licentious Age.

20. Uncleanneſs is another Sin, that Youth is prone to, this is the breach of the Seventh Commandment. In which Commandment there is a two fold Uncleanneſs forbidden, *firſt*, mental, or the uncleanneſs of the Mind; *ſecondly*, corporal, or that of the Body. Now Youth is commonly addicted to both theſe, and to watch, and wait for opportunities to fulfil their impure Luſts; hence in the 7th of the *Prov.* 6, 7, 8, 9. you read: *At the Window of my Houſe, I looked through the Caſement, and behold among the Simple Ones, I diſcerned among the Youths, a Young Man void of underſtanding, paſſing by the way to her Houſe, and he went near her Corner, in the twilight in the Evening, and behold there met him a Woman with the attire of an Harlot, his Eye waited for the twilight, and in the twilight he was taken by her*; as you may ſee in the 23 verſe. *Peter* ſpeaketh 2 Epiſt. 2 chap 4. verſ. of *Eyes that are full of Adultery.* It's true indeed, that this Sin hath

the ſame common principle as other Sins, *viz.* a corrupt Nature; it is ſeated in the Heart, there is the Fountain of it, 15. *Matth.* 19. *Out of the Heart proceed evil Thoughts, Murthers, Adulteries,* &c. But yet the Eye is the Heart's chief agent to eſpy out objects, and to find out and fetch in Fuel for this Sin: And as the Heart ſometimes ſets the Eye on work to prole, and range about for a beautiful Bait; ſo the Eye ſometimes meeting with Objects, ſets the Heart on work, yea, all a fire, or in a flame of adulterous Luſtings: Youth is a hot Age, and exceedingly propenſe to be carried away, with theſe laſcivious and filthy Luſtings (as hot and fat Grounds are moſt fertile and abounding with filthy Weeds) hence we find upon Record, 15. *Luke* 13, 14. the Younger Brother called the Prodigal Son, who ſpent all upon Harlots, his vicious and corrupt Affections were reſtleſs, and raging, till he had yielded his Members, as Inſtruments and Servants to this Sin of Uncleanneſs, as the Apoſtle phraſeth it in the 6. *Rom.* 13.&15. Not that I ſpeak this as if other Ages were free from ſuch inordinate Luſts: for Natural Corruption is not idle in any Age; but of all Ages, Youth is moſt inceſſantly, and violently bent hereunto: So that it is to be accounted a ſingular Mercy and Grace for a young Perſon to paſs that ſeaſon of Life chaſtly, as not to contract ſome ſuch notable

blot to cleave to him (like a Leproſie,) as ſhall be matter of juſt ſhame, and humiliation before the Lord, ſo long as he liveth. Sure I am the ſucceſs Satan hath had in poyſoning the Youth of this City with this ſordid and beaſtly Sin deſerves to be lamented (were it poſſible) with Tears of Blood: O how deſirable a Mercy would it be if the Lord would pleaſe to touch the Hearts of thoſe who are fearfully guilty of this baſe Sin among us, and bring them to cry out with the Leper, 13. *Lev.* 45. *I am unclean, I am unclean*; and to make that Confeſſion as the Prophet doth in 1. *Iſaiah 6. From the Sole of the Foot, to the Head, nothing but putrifying Sores*; and then to put up that Petition of *David*'s in 51. *Pſalm* 10. *Create in me a Clean Heart, O God.* And that of *Peter*'s in the 13. *John* 9. *Waſh me, Lord, not my Feet only, but my Hands and Head, yea, my whole Body, and my whole Soul alſo*; as *Paul* prayed for the *Theſſalonians*, 1 Chap. 5. 23. That God would ſanctifie them wholly in Body, Soul and Spirit.

21. The next and laſt Sin of Youth that I ſhall mention is, A woful giddineſs of Spirit to imbibe and receive any kind of looſe and wild Errors that are ſpread abroad. Indeed the Ringleaders and Broachers of Error oftentimes are perſons who have paſſed the flower of their Age: but uſually they that run after them and are proſelyted by them, they are our raw, and unexperienced

Youth,

Youth, and more especially such of them as have not been catechised, nor by the care and endeavours of Parents and Masters, been well grounded in the Principles of Religion, for want of which they have easily been seduced and led into Errours by such as lie in wait to deceive. And wo to us, are we not miserably over-run at this day with pernicious Errours? contending most unchristianly for our own Devices, and Parties, crying out, *Lo here is Christ, and there is Christ*, when more truly it may be said, Lo here is Satan, and there is Satan, transforming himself into an Angel of Light, and through his subtilty corrupting the minds of many among us from that simplicity which is in Christ. 2 *Cor.* 11. 3. Hence the Apostle was fill'd with a Godly jealousie and fear lest the *Corinthians* should be removed and carried away from Christ. The good Lord humble us for our swervings from the end of the Commandment, which is Love out of a pure Heart and of a good Conscience, and Faith unfeigned, and for our turning aside so much to vain Janglings. Errour has got the Ascendant in the Cockloft of some mens Brains, and there it so inebriates and infatuates them, that (like the *Gnosticks* of old, who under the pretence of New Light and Revelation, fansied themselves admirably Holier than others, so) these conceit themselves to be more Evangelical and refined, because more airy

airy and notional, and then they are ſtrongly inclined to ſpend all their Zeal in a violent obtruding their own ſtarving and ſleepy Opinions upon others, which indeed ſerve for no other end, but to devour all the Life and Subſtance of Religion, as the lean Kine, in *Pharaoh*'s dream, did eat up the Fat. How audaciouſly have ſome by their looſe and lewd Pens, and Tongues, argued againſt the merit and Deity of the Son of God, derided the Spirit of Prayer, advanc'd Morality, and the works of the Law in the room of Chriſt, boaſting of the ſufficiency of man's power to ſave himſelf: and then on the other hand, how induſtrious have ſome been to contrive a ſmooth and eaſie way for corrupt Nature to come to Heaven, without the toillome labour of ſubduing our Luſts, and Sinful Affections; as if now under the Goſpel the holy Law of God was no Rule for us to walk by, but laid flat (like an old Hedge) that Sinners may at their pleaſure trample on it, and walk over it: and that to be ſolicitous about Sanctification and Inherent Holineſs, is but a legal buſineſs, and not influential to a Chriſtian's Peace, nor Evidential of his Pardon; but that now the main deſign of the Goſpel at the firſt flight, is to mount Sinners ſo high as to poſſeſs them with a gallant triumphant Confidence, and ſtrong, gigantick Perſwaſion of the Everlaſting Decrees of God, that he hath Elected, and

loved

loved them, and that their Sins are pardoned, ſo that they need not trouble themſelves about Repentance, and the Law of God written or copied out on the Table of their Hearts, and the Inhabitation of the Spirit of Grace in their Souls, as a Principle of Spiritual Life. O how ſad a ſight is it to ſee the Field of the Church thus over-run with Tares, and the Houſe of God filled with Smoke! it's enough to fill us with fear that the Fire of God's Judgment is beginning there. Now this being the ſad genius of our Times, there are none more apt to take in the infection, than Youth, upon the account of that levity and curioſity that uſually poſſeſſeth that Age. Young people have itching Ears, and are very credulous, being rather willing to take what they hear on truſt than to trouble themſelves and take pains to try what conformity ſuch and ſuch Notions have to the unerring Rule, the Scriptures. Unſtable Youth is given to change, and like a Reed is ſoon ſhaken, or like young and freſh Meat in hot weather, which is moſt in danger of being Fly-blown. And Satan he is that old Serpent that is moſt buſie to blaſt and poyſon their hopeful Spring; he is that myſtical Fox that is ever more endeavouring to ſpoil our Vine of its tender Grapes, yea, when they begin to bud. Now when theſe two meet, a ſubtil Devil, and a ſimple Youth, what

danger

danger is there, of an impure copulation, between the young man's Mind and Errour, especially when in the one there is a pleasing Vagrancy and Vanity, like *Dinah* gadding abroad; and in the other a poysoning Energy. And alas how is this abundantly verified by woful experience at this day; shoals have been perverted, insomuch that our Land is like a Lazar-House or Hospital the Plague is begun among. O that there were some *Aaron* among us, to take a Censer and put on Incense, and go in quickly, and make an atonement; to allude to that 16 *Numb.*46. And thus I have finished the second Query proposed, *viz.* What those Sins are that Youth is here admonished to flee.

3d. Qu. *Why is it a Duty of such special concernment for Youth to flee these Sins?*

A. In the resolution of this I shall give you these two Reasons.

1. It is a duty of special concernment for Youth to flee these Sins: 1*st.* Because of the propriety of their Inherence. And

2*d.* Because of the malignity of their Influence.

1. Because of the Propriety of their Inherence. The roots of all these Youthful Lusts are deeply fixed in thy corrupt Nature. Hence they are here stiled Youthful Lusts, indeed Original Lust is one and the same specifically in all men; yet every Age hath its

its particular, proper Lusts: this appropriation cuts off young ones from all vain Excuses that ordinarily are made when they sin: O such a one provoked me, or Satan tempted me: Alas these Lusts are from thy self, they are inherent in thee; if it be enquired, Whence are all these heaps of filthy Lusts in young ones? the Answer is easie: *Out of the Heart proceed evil Thoughts, Murders, Adulteries, Fornication, Theft, false Witness, Blasphemies,* 15. Matth. 19. This is that Dunghil in which the whole Serpentine blood of all actual Sins is conceived, and brought forth: here is that hot *Ætna* which is within you (young ones) that never ceaseth from sending forth continual steams and fumes of vile Lusts. It is true, the Devil, and the World, are great enticers to Sin, but not like your inherent Lusts. 1 *James* 14. 15. *But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own Lust, and enticed: That when Lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth Sin; and Sin when it is finished, brings forth Death.* Satan and the World can only tempt and entice you Objectively, and Externally; but your youthful Lust tempts internally, and therefore more dangerous. Now see the strength of this 1*st.* Reason, viz. that that gives me most danger, that must put me on more labour and diligence to shun and escape. Besides whatever any of our spiritual Enemies should attempt

attempt to draw you to Sin, it would be altogether ineffectual, were it not for these Lusts within: These most endanger the Soul, and according to your mortifying and fleeing these, you may estimate the true estate of your Soul, to be a state of Grace 18. *Psalm* 23. *I was also upright before him, and have kept my self from mine Iniquity.* Alas young ones, the propriety and inherence of your Lusts is such as necessitates your continual Watchings, Strivings in Prayer at the Throne of Grace; if a man had a Thief in his House, a Fire in his Chamber, he had need to bestir himself, or he will be rob'd and burn'd. Young man, thou carriest Gunpowder about thy very Nature: O had thou not need to flee them, or that which carries Fire. It's dangerous yielding to thy youthful lust. It's like putting Fire to the Powder. It was the saying of a *German* Divine, when his Friends were commending him, recounting his usefulness and serviceableness, *Auferte ignem, adhuc enim paleas habeo*, Take away the Fire, for there is yet Chaff in me. O what Guards do you young ones need, to keep you from being ruin'd by so near domestick an Enemy. What sharp Winters of Frost and Snow, *i.e.* Fasting, Weeping or Suffering, dost thou need to kill these rank Weeds, *i. e.* thy youthful Lusts, in the Garden of thy Soul: the consideration of this Inherency of thy

Lust,

Luſt, (young man) calls for both inward and outward Exerciſes; Aſſiſtance internal; as Checks of Conſcience, ſolicitouſneſs of Thoughts, earneſtneſs of Deſires, actings of Faith in Chriſt, the ſtrivings, teachings, ſtrengthenings, quickenings of the bleſſed Spirit; External, as denying your Senſes that dangerous (tho' extreamly delightful Fleſh and Blood) liberty of a guardleſs, careleſs, and needleſs converſe with the world's Trinity, Honours, Pleaſures, Profits, and allowing your ſinful and needy Soul a due proportion of time in conſtant attendance upon God in all outward Ordinances, both publick and private, which he hath appointed and inſtituted for thy help and aſſiſtance to mortifie and abandon thy youthful luſts. It's upon this account and conſideration (namely that propriety of Sins inherence in thee) that renders this duty of fleeing thy youthful Sins ſo very difficult, hence it's called 18. *Matth.* 9 a cutting off a right Hand, a plucking out a right Eye; hence it is that the Gate of entrance into Life, is by our bleſſed Saviour called a ſtrait Gate; hence it is that if there were no Devil in the world to tempt you, or wicked Inſtruments to entice you, yet would you be carried out to commit all Evil with greedineſs, if you cloſe not with the Counſel here given you. Were it not for this propriety of your Luſts inherence, you might no more fear

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that roaring Lyon, that goeth about ſeeking whom he may devour; than the Lyon of the Tribe of *Judah*, who ſaid, *The Prince of this World cometh unto me, and finds nothing in me*, 14. John 30. But alas, your Luſts are within you, as the *Canaanite* in the Land of *Iſrael*, and they eaſily beſet you; there is a naturality of Sin now ſince the Fall, as blackneſs to the *Æthiopian*, and like a fretting Leproſie adheres to our Natures with ſo much pertinacy, that even after converſion Sin remains while on this ſide the Grave; which truth is verified by the ſad experience of all believers in the world, that ſo they may never put off their Chriſtian Armour till they put off this earthly Tabernacle, but be continually kept watching, fighting, running, wreſtling, praying, *&c.* after millions of Tears and Prayers ſtill they are fain to ſend up their Cries and Groans to Heaven for the abating, and deſtroying the remains of Pride, Atheiſm, Unbelief, *&c.* And what hope can be left (O young ones) that ever you will obtain a Victory, when your Enemy is ſo near you, nay, dwells in you, if you lie idle? nay, how ſure is it that you will be carried a miſerable Captive by your Luſts to Hell, if you take not this Advice, to flee your youthful Luſts, eſpecially if you conſider how the Devil night and day is watching to ſet Fire to thy Luſts? thou haſt a combuſtible Nature and Conſtitution, and

he is cunning and filled with Malice, and with all ſorts of Wiles, Depths, Baits, Snares for all tempers, and above all, he deſires to have young ones; ſo that to be ſecure and indifferent here, is in a ſenſe equivalent to yield your Souls to Sin and Satan: which brings me to the ſecond Reaſon of this Doctrine.

Second Reaſon. That therefore it is a duty of ſpecial concernment to Youth, to flee youthful Luſts, becauſe of the malignity of their influence: this I ſhall evidence to you more generally, and then more particularly. (1.) More generally. Your youthful Luſts ſo far as they prevail, they deſtroy your Souls. 8. *Rom.* 13. *If you live after the Fleſh you ſhall dye,* (Mark it I pray) upon what unalterable terms it runs. O the malignity of theſe Luſts, 7. *Rom.* 21. and the 23. *What Fruit had you then in thoſe things whereof you are now aſhamed, for the end of thoſe things is Death,* v. 23. *The wages of Sin is Death.* But to be more particular, there is a threefold evil influence theſe youthful Luſts (if not abandon'd) will certainly have upon you.

1. They will hinder your Converſion, or render it exceeding difficult.

2. They will hurry you into moſt grievous Temptations and Perplexities.

3. They will haſten your utter Ruin and Deſtruction.

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1. They will hinder your Converſion, or render it exceeding difficult, and this they will do theſe two ways.

1. As they wofully indiſpoſe the Soul to it.

2. As they directly oppoſe the means of it.

1. As they wofully indiſpoſe the Soul to it, this will appear, beyond the leaſt doubt, if you ſeriouſly conſider what a polluting a pernicious influence youthful Luſts have upon all the faculties of the Soul. Theſe Luſts they diffuſe a blindneſs upon the Mind, they benum the Conſcience, increaſe the natural rebellion of the Will, exceedingly harden the Heart, and miſerably enthral and deprave the Affections; and ſo they wofully indiſpoſe the Soul to converſion.

1*ſt*. They diffuſe a blindneſs on the Mind, that noble faculty, the thinking, diſcerning, and reaſoning Power of the Soul, which ſome call τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν, the leading and directing Faculty, which is to the Soul what Eyes are to the Body, therefore called 1. *Epheſ.*18. *the Eyes of the Underſtanding*; theſe Eyes youthful Luſts blind, ſo that they cannot ſee afar off to the end of a ſinful Life, how bitter and evil a thing Sin will prove at laſt, when God will bring the young man to Judgment, for all his youthful Luſts; hence they fearleſly choſe a courſe of Vanity, and Senſuality, in ſerving di-

vers Lusts, and Pleasures: Being blinded through their Lusts, they discern not the absolute necessity of a Saviour, they see no beauty in him that he should be desired; and what more effectual bar can there be to their Conversion? Alas, while the mind is blinded, tho' a poor Sinner hangs over Hell, every moment, under a just sentence of Condemnation, at the very door of Eternity, yet all's at peace, the Soul lieth in a deep, and deadly Sleep: though a Minister come, and weep over him, use the most rouzing Arguments with him, all's one, not a whit moved or stirred, though you speak never so much Reason, or Scripture. O Soul, thou hast an unholy Nature to be renewed, an offended God to be reconciled to, thou hast innumerable Sins, and not one of them pardoned: thou hast Death and Judgment to make ready for, thou hast but a few more days on Earth, yet while the mind is blinded they make light of all; a merry tale will more affect them, Romances, Plays and Comedies, such Bubbles, and empty Vanity are much more pleasing, than the most powerful Heavenly Sermon. Now whence is this? but from the blindness of young mens Minds? and whence is this blindness, but from their youthful Lust? as you may read in that appositе Scripture *Ezek.* 14. and 5. *They are all estranged from me through their Lusts.* Lust in *David* blot-

ted out the impreſſion, and remembrance of the Evil, and danger of ſinning againſt God: hence when he was recovered by effectual Grace, ſee how he rates himſelf in *Pſal.* 73. 22. *So fooliſh and ignorant was I, even as a Beaſt before thee.* Luſt intoxicates the Mind, and then like a Drunkard, that through the vapours that fume up into his Head, ſleepeth, and forgetteth all his dangers, his debts. So it is here, and O how impoſſible is thy Converſion, while thy Mind is thus darkened, the Mind, that is the Watch-man of thy Soul, to keep off Sin, and danger; and if the watch-man be blind, how ſmall hope of Converſion? By this you ſee how youthful Luſts indiſpoſe the Soul to Converſion, as they blind the mind.

2*dly*, They indiſpoſe the Soul for converſion as they ſtupifie Conſcience, that Spy in our Boſom, that Vice-gerent of the ſupream Judge, whoſe office is various (1.) to record and regiſter all we do, (2.) To bear witneſs, and give in evidence. (3.) As a Judge to paſs ſentence, Conſcience ſits on the Throne as God's Deputy in the Soul, to award out Life or Death. (4.) To be a Tormentor, a never-dying Worm, it is to the damned in Hell, and an inſupportable burden to ſome on Earth, creating ſuch internal Anxieties, and Tortures, that all the Arts, Wits, Pleaſure, and Diverſions in the world cannot root out; as in *Belſhazzar*, *Cain*, *Judas*, *Tiberius*,

Tiberius, *Nero*, *Caligula*, &c. of theſe divers offices and acts of Conſcience, you read in *Rom.* 2. 15. 1 *John* 3. 20, 21. *Prov.* 18. 14. And that in order to Converſion, it is neceſſary, that this buſie Faculty in man be awakened, will appear, if you conſider that 8 of *Jer.* 6. *God hearkened and heard, and no man repented him, ſaying, What have I done? but every one turned to his courſe, as the Horſe ruſheth into the Battel.* There you have God's inquiſition, and ſearch, to find out whether that People repented or no, I *hearkened and heard* (ſaith God.) Then you have God's evidence brought in, *no man repented*, or converted; and then you have the Cauſe laid down of their not repenting *No man ſaid, What have I done? q. d.* Had Conſcience been awakened to have done its office, to have div'd into all their Villanies; had that domeſtick Spie in the Boſom brought in a true account, concerning what they had done, they would certainly have repented e'er this. Alas, the ſubtile Heart of a Sinner, will endure, and bear all the hiſtorical notions of the evil of Sin, of the terribleneſs of Hell (as one in Health can bear the names and notions of Plague, Stone, Colick, and the moſt tormenting diſeaſe, and all but as Powder ſhot, and ſcare-Crow untill Conſcience, like *Peter*, 2. *Acts* 36, 37 cloſeth particularly with Sinners thus, *Ye men they that with wicked Hands crucified the Lord*

Lord of Glory; and then they were pricked to the Heart: and as *Nathan* closed with *David*, 2. *Sam.* 12. 7. He draws his Parable out of the Clouds, and enters him with this arrest, *Thou art the man*; then he presently cries out, *I have sinned.* O believe it, Sirs, when once Conscience meets with a desperate Sinner, that hath been ruffling it, in all manner of Riot for a time, drenching himself in sensual pleasures, and Conscience in the name of the great God arrests him, with an, O wretch! what hast thou done? thus, and thus to provoke the Great, the Holy, the Righteous, sin-revenging God; I have been privy to all thy secret, as well as open Wickedness, and I have sad News to tell thee, that the Wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against thee, *&c.* Thus when Conscience finds out a Sinner, and spits as it were Hell-Fire in his Face, believe me, it will eftsoon put the Soul upon the Rack, and cause it to break forth with an, O Wo is me! the Sins which I now see, are bitter as Death; the Wrath that I begin to feel at present, and that to come that I fear, makes a kind of *Tophet* within me. O if I should dye in this case, what would become of me? Lord! is there no mercy? What shall I do to be saved? Thus Conscience in its efficacious working, is necessary to Humiliation, which is one great part of Conversion; and then for hope of mercy, and pardon, and a

fixed reſolution to forſake all known Sin, and returning home to God, which makes up, and compleats a Sinners converſion, you may eaſily diſcern, from what I have ſaid, as to the firſt part of Converſion, the neceſſity of a waking, working Conſcience, in order to Converſion: for it is the property of Conſcience to turn in upon the Soul, and debate matters diſcurſively, in a kind of ſilent reaſoning with the Soul: it hath both a directive, and reflexive power; it takes that light that lay cold and uſeleſs before in the mind, and brings it down in way of home application to the Soul, 3. *Lam.* 40. 119. *Pſal.* 59. And now I come to make good what is propoſed, namely, That Youthful Luſts ſtupefie, and benum this faculty of Conſcience, and ſo indiſpoſe the Soul to Converſion. (Look you, Sirs, although it is not in the power of young or old Sinners to raſe out, and expunge this Faculty out of their Breaſts; for it is ſo eſſential to the Soul, as that the Soul can't be a Soul wirhout it: nothing can be more inſeparable than this boſom Judge, which one calleth *ſenſus, & præjudicium judicij divini*. Yet (though I ſay they can't get rid on't, they may, and often do by a love and life of ſin gag it, muzle and ſtifle it for the preſent, they caſt Conſcience into a deep ſleep by yielding to their Luſts. One calleth the Love of Sin the *Devil's Opium*, whereby he lulls

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Conſcience aſleep. Hence it is that you read of its being *paſt feeling*, and *ſeared as with an hot Iron Epheſ.* 4. 19. and *1 Tim.* 4. 2. *defiled, polluted*, 1. *Tit.* 15. not performing their offices, being deaf to every holy ſuggeſtion of God's Spirit. O young people, your luſts ſerved, and obeyed, will make your Conſciences to be like *Lot*, when he was made drunk by his Daughters, of whom it's ſaid, *That in the Morning, he knew nothing what he had done*, in *Gen* 19. Thy Luſts will breed ſuch ſottiſhneſs, and ſtupidity in thy Conſcience, as will moſt certainly hinder thy Converſion. Conſcience is a Witneſs, but if that witneſs be dumb, who ſhall tell thee of thy Sin, and danger? Conſcience is a Schoolmaſter, to direct, and correct; but if that Schoolmaſter be blind, or craz'd, or lie like one ſtark mad, or dead, who (I pray) ſhall admoniſh you, and adminiſter reproof to you? alas, we ſpeak without you, it's Conſcience that is as a thouſand Witneſſes within you; and if that be like an Idol, what hope of Converſion? Conſcience is the Candle of the Lord within thee, and if this be put under a Buſhel, how eaſily may the Devil hurry thee blind-fold to Hell and Damnation. Conſcience is appointed of God to be that to the Soul, as the Pilot is to the Ship amidſt Rocks, Sands; ſuppoſe now that the Pilot have either loſt his Compaſs to ſteer by, or has no ſupernal light to make

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an Obſervation by, how improbable is it, that the Ship ſhould ever come ſafe to Harbour! So if Conſcience be ſtupified, how unlikely is it, that ever that Soul ſhould be converted. It hath been, and ſtill is to me, juſt ground of wonder, and aſtoniſhment, that when a Miniſter comes in the Name, and by the Authority of the Great *Jehovah*, Maker of Heaven and Earth, to a Congregation of ſinful Worms, and there preach, and prove to them, out of the infallible Scriptures, that they are born in Sin, and that in their natural conditions, they are but a few ſteps off Eternal Damnation: and that there is a bleſſed Jeſus come to ſeek and ſave what is loſt, and that he is able, and willing to ſave to the uttermoſt all that come to him: and yet after a Miniſter hath done all this, not one (probably) of many Scores in the Auditory that brings the Doctrine preached, home to his own Soul, ſaying, This is my Condition, my Soul's portion, I am by Nature a Child of wrath, God's Law hath found me out, and convinced me of ſin, that there are none more guilty than I, and more worthy of Hell: I am the Man, the Woman, whom it curſeth, as ſure as if my Name was mentioned; but the generality detain the Truth in Unrighteouſneſs, they go away, and live as wickedly as before. Now (the Lord be merciful to us) how could ever Duſt and Aſhes be thus unconcerned,

concerned, did but Conſcience roundly, and ſoundly do its work, (*viz.*) to bear witneſs, to paſs ſentence, *&c.* But here is the bane of all, and the true Cauſe of mens Impenitency and Unconverſion, they hearken and yield to their luſts, and thereby Conſcience is laid aſleep. O young people, ſee the malignity of Sin's influence, and ſay, Away ye curſed Luſts, it's high time, O my Soul, to flee theſe. Awake, Conſcience, awake, it's high time to regard thy meſſage.

3*dly.* Theſe youthful Luſts, they increaſe that natural rebellion that is in the Will againſt turning to God; and ſo they indiſpoſe the Soul to Converſion: the Will is an excellent part, or power of the reaſonable Soul: it is compar'd, by ſome, to the *Primum Mobile* in the Heavens, that carrieth all the inferiour Orbs away in its own motion; or like a Queen ſitting upon its Throne, exerciſing its dominion over the other parts of the Soul: And as Conſcience hath ſeveral offices, and acts, ſo hath the Will. The Schoolmen marſhall up ſeveral; as. Volition, and that either abſolute, and efficacious, or more languid, and imperfect: (2.) Fruition: (3.) Intention: (4.) Election: (5.) Reſolution and Conſent, *&c.* but I ſhall only ſhew you how impoſſible a ſaving and ſound Converſion of the Soul can ever be, except the Will, this ſuperiour faculty in the Soul, be brought into ſubjection and obedi-

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ence to Chriſt: and then ſhew you how youthful Luſts not only hinder that ſubjection of the Will to Chriſt, but ſtrengthen its reſiſtance and rebellion againſt it.

(1) How impoſſible a thing Converſion is without the Will be brought into obedience to Chriſt. When God firſt created Man upon Earth, this noble part of the Soul, the Will, was in a moſt perfect and holy conformity to the Will of God; but ſince Sin entred, the Will is ſo far fallen from its primitive honour, that *Bernard* ſaith, *voluntas tua infernus eſt tuus*, that mans Will now is his Hell; of a Virgin, ſhe is now become like a polluted Whore; So that naturally we will not come to Chriſt, *John* 5. 40. We will not be made clean, *Jer.* 13. 27. We will walk after our own Devices, *Jer.* 18. 12. Now how impoſſible a thing is it, that there ſhould be a through Converſion, till this natural Rebellion of the Will is ſlain, and removed; for the Will is the man, and it's everlaſtingly true, and will be found ſo, *That his you are whom you willingly obey, whether it be of Sin unto Death, or Obedience unto Righteouſneſs*, Rom. 6. 16.

(2.) Youthful Luſts yielded unto, ſtrengthen that natural averſeneſs and obſtinacy that is in our Will, and ſo it indiſpoſeth the Soul to Converſion. We read that *Whoredom and Wine take away the Heart*, in *Hoſea* 4. 11. Why, may ſome ſay, was the Heart ſet upon God

God before? No not at all, but by it is meant that those Lusts do exceedingly augment that estrangedness to, and distance from God. So here there is a natural rebellion in the Will against God: but these youthful Lusts when fulfilled, do much more add to that resistance and opposition, and further that wretched and vile aversion in the Will to God. And they will introduce such a vile setled habitual enmity in the Will to the blessed God, as that you will wish there were no God, with *David*'s Fool in the 14. *Psal.* 1. For you cannot but know that your Lusts are detestable to the holy and pure Nature of God, *who is of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity*, as the Prophet speaks in the 1. *Hab.* 13. You have items of this in your own Breasts, you cannot plead ignorance herein, that when you obey your Lusts, you do that abominable thing which his Soul hateth and abhorreth; which (being done) most certainly influenceth the Will to a dislike of, and regret at the holy Nature of God, that you like not to retain him in your thoughts, but will account thine own impure lusts more desirable, and better than God: and if so, you may easily make an estimate how these youthful lusts indispose the Soul to Conversion: it may as well stand with the life of a man to be cast into the depth of the Sea with a Millstone about his neck, as it can stand with

with thy Converſion whilſt thou yieldeſt obedience to thy youthful Luſts; for theſe more and more alienate thy Will from God and Chriſt, and ſwell thee with pride and enmity againſt the holy Will and Word of God, that it will become a pleaſing thing to thee to ſhove God out of thy thoughts: 10. *Pſal.* 4. and to ſay to the Almighty, *Depart from me, I deſire not the knowledge of thy ways:* And can this ſtand with Converſion? O ſee the malignity of the influence that thy youthful Luſts have upon thy Will, to hinder thy Converſion: with what aſtoniſhment ſhould you bethink your ſelves, and ſay, What a wretch am I to yield to my youthful luſts, which ſet my Will againſt my bountiful and bleſſed Maker, the Author of my Life and Being. O the compleat and comprehenſive Wickedneſs of this, enough to make me tremble; what to hate God, and love my luſts that will damn me! O horrid temper, how canſt thou hold up thy Head before him whoſe Eyes are as a Flame of Fire, if there be found in thee an obſtinate downright averſation in thy Will! ſurely, O my Soul, if thou were to live here a thouſand years, and hadſt no other buſineſs than to bewail this, it would not be ſufficient: O young ones think of this. O that God would ſet it home upon your Hearts; methinks it ſhould caſt you down with amazement, and compel you to

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ſay, when tempted to yield to your youthful Luſts, with that excellent young man in the 39. *Gen.* 1. *How can I do ſo great Wickedneſs and ſin againſt God.*

4*thly*. Theſe youthful luſts indiſpoſe the Soul to Converſion, as they exceedingly harden the heart: hence have you that admonition in the 3. *Heb.* 13. *Take heed leſt you be hardened through the deceitfulneſs of Sin.* There is a threefold hardneſs incident to the heart of man: (1.) Natural: (2.) Habitual or contracted: (3.) Judicial or penal. (1.) the Natural is found in all men, as they come into the world in their ſeveral Ages and Generations; it is derived to us from *Adam*, and it's part of that wretched corrupt nature that we receive from him by our immediate Parents. (2.) the Contracted or acquired hardneſs is that which we bring upon our hearts by a courſe of Sin: we read of it in *Prov.* 29. 1. *Ezek.* 3. 7. and *Rom.* 20. 5, 6. (3.) the Judicial hardneſs is a tradition, or being given up to our own hearts luſts, by a juſtly provoked God, not that God infuſeth any evil diſpoſition into the heart, but withdraweth his gracious Spirit, *Deut.* 29. 9. and moreover he leaves the ſtubborn Sinner to his own natural and contracted hardneſs, whereby he becometh more blind, dead, refractory, and obſtinate than ever: of this we read in the 9 of *Exodus* and the 12. in the inſtance of the Lord's

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hardening *Pharaoh*'s Heart. *Iſa.* 6. 9, 10. *Go and tell this People, hear you indeed, but underſtand not; and ſee you indeed, but perceive not; make the Heart of this People fat, leſt they be converted.* It is a tremendous Text, and is quoted ſix times in the New Teſtament, *Math.* 13. 14. *Mark* 4. 12. *Luk.* 8. 10. *John* 12. 40. *Acts* 28. 26. *Rom.* 11. 8. Now it is principally the ſecond and third (*viz.*) Contracted and Judicial hardneſs that youthful luſts yielded to, do miſerably bring upon the Heart. Theſe make the Heart like the *Leviathan*'s ſcales, as *Job* ſpeaks: theſe do as it were bury their Heart in the Grave, and roll a great Stone over it; and ſo they indiſpoſe the Soul to Converſion: for what fruit can ever be expected from a Rock, or a Stone: let the Rain come down from Heaven upon it, let the Sun ſhine with its Beams upon it; let the Seed's-man caſt his Seeds on it, yet the Rock is a Rock ſtill: So it is with a ſtony rocky Heart, let there be line upon line, and precept upon precept, alas there is no impreſſion made, neither can there be, until there be a removal of its hardneſs; and that can never be till the cauſe of that hardneſs be removed, which is a going on in the practice of theſe vile Luſts. O the malignity of their influence, they ſtop the Ears that the Heart becomes like the deaf Adder, they ſhut the Eyes, they fold up the Arms, they make the Heart like an Adamant, regardleſs

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under threatnings, and all other adminiſtrations uſed by God to awaken, convince, and convert Sinners; let one Miniſter come after another and cry aloud, lift up their Voices like Trumpets in the ſhrilleſt manner as *Boanerges*; yet as *Zephaniah* telleth us in 3. Chap. 5. *They know no ſhame:* let God ſpeak to them in their Proſperity, they will not hearken, 22. *Jer.* 21. let him multiply upon them the Fruits and Expreſſions of his Goodneſs, in daily Preſervations, Deliverances, *&c.* yet they *deſpiſe the Riches of his Goodneſs*, 2. *Rom.* 4. and 32. *Deut.* 15. *But* Jeſurun *waxed fat, and kicked: then he forſook God which made him.* O the malignity of Sin's influence: *Solomon* ſaith in 9. *Eccleſ.* 3. *It fills the Heart with madneſs while they live.* O young man, thou art beſides thy ſelf, bereaved of the right uſe of thy Reaſon, by following of thy luſts: hadſt thou ever any fear, or tenderneſs, any ſenſe of Sin, any compunction of Heart. O if thou yieldeſt to thy Luſts, how quickly will all be extinguiſhed; and not only ſo, but thoſe Luſts will bring thee to ſuch obduration as will lay thee naked and open to the unexpreſſible Miſery of having that Scripture fulfilled upon thee, 6. *Iſaiah*, and the 9. and 29 Chap. 10. *The Lord hath poured upon you the Spirit of a deep ſleep.* We may ſtand amazed to ſee how Perſons adorned with excellent Endowments of Nature, that have

great ability in natural things, men of great Senſe, as we ſay, when they hear how their unmortified Luſts war againſt their Souls, and expoſe them to the Wrath of God, and Everlaſting Burning; yet can go on in their luſts without remorſe, or any akings of Heart; nay, that which made the Son of God to bleed, and brought him to ſuch bitter Agonies, and ſtrong Cries and Groans, and for which Vengeance is now tearing and tormenting thouſands in Hell. Alas, all is but as a Dream, while ſin prevaileth it hardeneth the Heart to a degree of ſpiritual Phrenſy, *Hoſea* 7. 9. 5. *Jer.* 3. 5. *Iſa.* 12. and 1. Chap. 5. like *Jonah*, faſt aſleep in the ſides of the Ship tho' ready to periſh. Young men, remember it, yielding to your Luſts will ſo inſenſibly harden you, that you will be like a man that is ſeized with the dead Palſie, whom tho' you pinch and ſtrike, he feels nothing; or like *Solomon's* beſotted Wretch, 7. *Prov.* 14, 15. *They have ſtricken and beaten me, but I felt it not.* Or like the Prophet's Æthiopian, 13. Jer. 23. *Can the Æthiopian change his Skin, and the Leopard his Spots?* then may you change your accuſtomed Evil. *Bernard* deſcribing the malignity of Sin's influence as to its encroaching Nature, obſerves this *Gradation: At firſt*, ſaith he, *it is importable, next time heavy, then eaſy, then light, then ſweet, at laſt neceſſary.* Wherefore flee youthful Luſts, as ever you

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would escape these Soul-ruining Evils, as blindness of Mind, searedness of Conscience, incurable hardness of Heart: all which indispose the Soul to Conversion; nay, they expose it to Damnation.

5*thly*, These youthful Lusts indispose the Soul to Conversion, as they miserably enslave and defile the Affections, which are seated in the sensitive appetite of a man: and they are such as these, Anger, Love, Joy, Fear, Sorrow; these are planted in us to be subservient to our Souls in glorifying God, and working out our own Salvation: But through these youthful Lusts they become subservient to Satan, and predominant over the Soul, bringing it into miserable bondage, and vile slavery, and so indispose it to Conversion. In Prayer, thy affections should be fixed on God in Christ, as the sole object of thy Love, Delight, and filial Fear: But are they so? dost thou draw nigh to God as thy exceeding joy? tell me, young man, where are thy *Bethels*? thy *Pennels*? I doubt, upon a serious review, it will be found quite otherwise, that vain thoughts have lodged in thy mind, and that swarms of noisome Lusts have been tumbling up and down the dead Sea of thy Soul in time of Prayer. Ah, how little of love to God, hatred of Sin, answerable to their nature, have possessed your Souls in duty: if any pious stirrings of Affections have been, how

ſhort a ſtay have they made; how many more ambitious, wanton, covetous or revengeful Thoughts have been jumbled together, with them I appeal to you. Is it not enough to change that Prayer into Sin, wherein thy God hath been lodged with a crew of viperous Luſts, or rather wherein thy Affections have been committing ſpiritual Fornication with their Idols, or have been (*Dinah* like) gadding abroad with the Fools Eyes to and fro to the ends of the Earth. Now upon enquiry whence this comes about, if thou ſearch impartially, and caſt the lot right, it will appear that the Arch-Agent of, and in all this is thy minion Luſt, that Youth is under the power of: ſome complain of continual diſtractions in Prayer, their Minds are like the unquiet Waves of the Sea, up and down; their Affections unſtable, rambling up and down. Alas, the main reaſon of this woful poſture in Duty, is their unmortified Luſts; and it is very obſervable that the more proviſion you make for the Fleſh, to fulfil it in its luſts, the more dominion and tyranny it will have over your Thoughts and Affections in holy Duties: and is ſuch a Prayer ever like to iſſue in thy Converſion, wherein thy Affections have been under the vile umpire and influence of thy Luſts? It may rather be called a Service done to thy Luſts, than to God. There was *Jehu*, what ardent and zealous affection

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did he seem to have in the Service and Cause of God, when he cryed out, *Come see my Zeal for the Lord of Hosts.* But what was it that influenced and moved his affections? it was not the Glory of God, but the lust of Vain-glory and Self-advancement. Experience confirms this, that many in their youth have had shews of great affection in their Profession of Godliness, who have after a while fell away, and become at last as senseless and stupid about Heavenly things as any prophane one in the world.

O young People, those Lusts you serve, will have such an ill influence on your Affections, as that they will become like wild Horses, to tear your Souls in pieces. O cursed Lusts, how unspeakable is that thraldom they lay our affectionate part under, that when thy Affections should be like *Elijah's* fiery Chariot, to mount thy Soul up to Heaven, they should (through thy lust) be like the Wheels of a *Jehu's* Chariot, furiously to hurry thy Soul to Hell. Our affections were planted in us for this end, to facilitate, and make our access to God, to become easie, pleasant, and delightful to our Soul; but, O miserable change, they now are quite contrary, (through thy unmortified Lusts) they are like Clogs, Chains, and Fetters, to hinder the Soul's approach to God. When at any time the Ship of thy Soul should hoise sail for Heaven, thy Affections (being de-

filed and led captive by thy Luſts) will (like a Sheet-Anchor) hold it back: When thou ſhouldſt be loving the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, with all thy Soul, and with all thy Mind; which our Saviour telleth you, *is that firſt, and great Commandment, on which all depends: for* (ſaith Chriſt) *on this hang all the Law and the Prophets.* O how deplorable a caſe is it! that inſtead of this, my depraved Affections ſhould terminate upon, and cleave to a Cup, or a Whore, or a dunghil world! O monſtrous wickedneſs! O young men bethink your ſelves what a pernicious temper this is; ought it not to cut you to the very Heart, to find your ſelves convicted of ſuch enmity, and averſion in your affections to the bleſſed God; and whence is it but from your youthful Luſts? O diſeaſed Soul; if thy luſts had not corrupted, and perverted thy Affections thou wouldſt have thought God as ſuitable an object for thy love, as meat to the hungry, and drink to the thirſty. Is he not the chieſeſt, beſt, moſt excellent, comprehenſive, pureſt, fulleſt, and moſt immutable, permanent Good? Should not an object ſo admirably fit attract and allure thy ſuperlative love? Do you not know, do n't your Conſciences tell you, that your affections ought to be placed on God above all? and ought it not to fill your Souls with horror, when you find not your affections ſtrongly be-

and inclined to him? how much more then ſhould you loath your ſelves, when your Affections are ſullenly averſe to him? Is not this a fearful pitch of malignity? wouldſt thou not think him a vile Miſcreant, and reckon the Earth too good to bear him, that ſhould hate the preſence of his own Father, and abhor all converſe with him? and canſt thou ſo accuſe, and condemn ſuch a one, and not thy ſelf for much greater degrees of wickedneſs? better thy affections were diſinclined to thy neareſt Relations, yea, to thy ſelf, than to the bleſſed God, who is the ſpring of thy life and being; and yet thus it is while thy Luſts are obeyed, inſtead of loving God, thou loveſt thy Pleaſures more than God: inſtead of hating Sin, thou hateſt God more than Sin. O then, poſſeſs thy Soul throughly with a due and deep ſenſe of this great Evil, that thy youthful Luſts do thy poor Soul in depraving thy Affections; ſo that they ſeem to be in you, what the Devils were in the Herd of Swine, violently carrying you from God, the fountain of living Waters, to lying Vanities.

And thus I have ſhewed you how theſe youthful Luſts do hinder Converſion, as they indiſpoſe the Soul in all its parts, and faculties to Converſion. Which brings me to the ſecond thing, namely, to ſhew how theſe Luſts do hinder Converſion, as they directly

oppoſe the means of it, and that both on God's part and yours.

1. On God's part: Theſe youthful Luſts provoke God to withdraw his Spirit and Grace, and leave you to your own Heart Luſts; and then what hope of Converſion remains? It is God alone that can take away that Stony Heart, and give a Heart of Fleſh, that quickens the dead Soul. In Converſion we are ſaid to be *his Workmanſhip, created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good Works*, 2. *Epheſ.* 10. And St. *John* ſaith, 1. *John* 13. *We are born again, not of Blood, nor of the Will of the Fleſh, nor of the Will of man*; that is, not by any natural power, vertue, or ſtrength inherent in them; *But of the Will God, it's he that worketh both to will and to do*; and his people are ſaid to *be a willing People in the day of his Power*, Pſal. 110. 3. The Metaphors that the holy Ghoſt uſeth in Scripture, to ſet forth the work of Converſion by, do plainly point out this, That no leſs power than that Omnipotent Power of God, is required to the Converſion of a Sinner: as for inſtance, (1.) That of the Reſurrection from the dead, 6. *Rom.* 4. to raiſe the Dead, is the effect of an Almighty Power. (2.) That of Creation, 2. *Epheſ.* 10. And who can create but God? no Creature can, the mightieſt Angel cannot create the meaneſt Worm. The

Converſion is ſet forth in Scripture, to be the Lord's own workmanſhip. Hence you read, 2. *Epheſ.* 1. *You hath he quickned, who were dead in Sins and Treſpaſſes.* And in 36. *Ezek.* 27. *A new Spirit alſo will I put within you, and cauſe you to walk in my Statutes, and ye ſhall do them.* And in 1 *Cor.* 4. 7. *Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what haſt thou, that thou didſt not receive?* And it was God that opened *Lydia*'s Heart: It is true that the Lord of Heaven, the God of all Grace, who could work of himſelf, and without any means, is pleaſed to make uſe of means; to wit, his Word; as in the 1. *James* 18. *By the Word of Truth, of his own Will begat he us, that we ſhould be a kind of Firſt Fruits of his Creatures.* Hence the *Word* is called *the Incorruptible Seed*, 1 *Pet.* 1. 23. and the *Goſpel* is called *the miniſtration of the Spirit.* Hence the Lord hath appointed and inſtituted the great and honourable Office of the Miniſtry, and beſtows Gifts on his Miniſters, to preach the everlaſting Goſpel to the World, to open Sinners Eyes, and turn them from Darkneſs to Light. Hence Miniſters are called *Spiritual Fathers*; not that there is any inherent power in either the Word it ſelf, or him that preacheth it, but from the Spirit of God, whoſe Inſtruments we are, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4, 5. *The Weapons of our Warfare* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *are mighty through God to the pulling down of*

of ſtrong holds, &c. And in 2 *Cor.* 4. 7. *We have this Treaſure in Earthen Veſſels, that the Excellency of the Power may be of God*: So then ſaith the ſame Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 3. 7. *Neither is he that planteth, any thing, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increaſe.* Not any thing in a way of efficiency, only inſtrumentally; as a Pen is the Inſtrument, but it's the Hand that writes: ſo the Word preached, and the diſpenſer of it, are Inſtruments of Converſion: but it's the Spirit of God is the quickning Agent: for it muſt needs ſurpaſs the ſtrength of a Creature to change the Nature, and to cauſe a return from ſo miſerable a privation, and death, as by Nature we are in; unto ſo glorious and excellent a participation of the divine Nature, and Life, as every converted Soul is put into, when transformed into the Image of God.

Now then to raiſe the Argument, and build upon this Foundation that I have laid; if the principal efficient Cauſe and means of Converſion on God's part, be his own Almighty Arm revealed, and made bare, his Spirit poured out, and putting forth a quickning vital Energy; then there's little hope of Converſion, where this Almighty Agent is provoked ſo far forth, as to with-hold his Spirit, and to leave a Sinner to his own Hearts Luſt. But youthful luſts yielded to, and ſerved, do moſt certainly thus provoke God

God to withdraw his Spirit, and Grace; and therefore obſtruct their Converſion, in a direct oppoſing the means of it on God's part. That they do thus provoke God, is evident from theſe Scriptures, 81. *Pſal.* 11, 12. *But my People would not hearken to my Voice, and* Iſrael *would none of me: So I gave them up unto their own Hearts Luſts, and they walked in their own Counſels.* 1. Rom. 26. *For this cauſe* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *God gave them up to vile Affections.* This Text, it's true, ſpeaketh of the *Heathens*, of whom the Apoſtle had been ſpeaking before, in ver. 19, 20. he had been ſhewing what means they had to know God; they had not the Light of the Goſpel, as we have, only the Light of Nature: then he ſheweth us, ver. 21. how they had abuſed this Light; wherefore ſaith he, *For this cauſe God gave them up.* You ſee here what may befall poor *Heathens*, that have no more than a Natural Light; yet even they, for not improving, and living up to that, may ſo far provoke God, as to give them up. O what do you think, young people, that are within the Pale of the Church, you have what the *Heathen* had, and you have ſuperadded a further and more excellent Light, the Light of Scripture; and many of you have the enlightenings of the Spirit in manifold Convictions: I ſay what do you think will become of you, who obey

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not the Goſpel? you may read in 2 *Theſſ.* 1. 7, 8. what your Portion will be, without ſpeedy fleeing your youthful Luſts. Did God give up the *Heathens*? O be afraid, young ones, that have the Light of Scripture before your Eyes in this Text: flee youthful luſts, leſt you by yielding to them provoke God to ſay, as once to *Ephraim*, *He is joyned to Idols, let him alone. q. d.* Such a one knoweth better, but he hateth the Light; he muſt have his Luſts, let him have them, let his Heart be made fat, that he never convert and turn. O fearful ſign of Reprobation. You will find your Soul (like a Bowle down hill) rowling to Hell amain. *For if we ſin wilfully, after that we have received the Knowledge of the Truth, there remains no more Sacrifice for Sin, but a certain fearful looking for of Judgment, and fiery Indignation, which ſhall devour the Sinner.* 10. Heb. 26, 27. *My Spirit*, ſaith God, *ſhall not always ſtrive with man*, 6. Gen. 3. O young People, did you never find the Spirit of God in this Text, or others, tending to the ſame thing, to abandon your Luſts, ſtriving with you? Have you had no Motion to excited? have you had no Thoughts caſt in that have had this aſpect and tendency which you have repreſt, and reſiſted through the indulgence of your youthful Luſts? Know it, young man, that herein you have provoked God to take away his holy Spirit

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and it is a righteous thing that the Spirit of *God* ſhould retire, and deſiſt as to further influences, and operations; which ſhould make you with awful thoughts retire into your own Soul, and ſmite upon the Thigh, and ſay, *What have I done? I have provoked the Moſt High God to withdraw his Spirit: and can that Sin be ſmall, that hazards the favour of God, and the life of my Soul for ever?* If once the abuſed Spirit of God depart, and leave thee to thy youthful Luſt, thou wilt be like *Sampſon*, when his Locks (wherein his ſtrength lay) were cut, *Judges* 16. 20. It was told *Sampſon* that the *Philiſtines* were upon him, and he awoke out of ſleep, and ſaid, *I will go out as at other times before, and ſhake my ſelf, and he wiſt not that the Lord was departed from him:* Or, like *Eſau*, *Heb.* 12. 17. who afterward would have inherited the Bleſſing, but was rejected, *for he found no place for Repentance, tho' he ſought it carefully with Tears*: Or like thoſe Mountains of *Gilboa*, upon which neither the Rain, nor Dew falls. They ſay that naſtineſs in a Dove-houſe will cauſe the Dove to leave that Houſe: Sure I am that your youthful unclean Luſts will in time drive away that myſtical Dove, the holy Ghoſt, from thy Soul; and then who ſhall quicken thy dead Soul? Alas, if that great Maſter of Aſſemblies leave thee, never more to ſtrive with thee: what can poor Miniſters

do?

do? Suppoſe there were a vaſt Aſſembly o Godly, able Divines met to conſult abou thy Cure; they muſt all return (*re infecta*) i vain, and ſay, as the King of *Iſrael* did i another caſe to the poor Woman, that cri to him in time of Famine, *Help, my Lo O King:* And he ſaid, *If the Lord do n help thee, whence ſhall I help thee, out of th Barn-floor, or out of the Wine preſs?* 2 King. 26, 27. So here, if the Lord have do with thee, and will not pity, and hel whence ſhould we out of our barren So and earthen Veſſels? your caſe is dreadfu and we can give you our Tears, but we ca not give you any Oyl, not a drop of ſavin Grace. If God have given you the Spi of Slumber, and a deep Sleep, *Iſa.* 29. 1 11. *Rom.* 8. Can we open the Heart, God ſhut it up? Can we plow up the Groun if God lay it Fallow? here's a judgment i deed! *If a man ſin againſt God* (ſaith Eli) w *ſhall intreat for him?* So if God ſet himſ againſt a Soul, who can recover that Sou Thus you ſee the malignity of that influ ence youthful Luſts have, in hindring of Co verſion, as thoſe luſts do oppoſe the mea of it, on God's part, provoking him to t judicial penal act, of withdrawing his Gra and delivering up to their own hearts luſt And therefore it is a duty of ſpecial conce to young ones, to flee their youthful lu But then in the ſecond place, it will further

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appear, if you conſider, that theſe youthful luſts do oppoſe the means of Converſion on the Soul's part.

2. Youthful Luſts oppoſe the means of Converſion on our own part, ſuch as Conſideration, Prayer, and attendance upon God in his holy Word, Reſolution, and Reformation.

But here (perhaps) you may object, and ſay, *That Converſion is not in your power, it is not in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, but in God who giveth Grace, and ſheweth Mercy, to whom he pleaſeth*, ex mero motu ſuo, & beneplacito, *and who can move him, or command it from it?*

A. This is a point which very many young ones (through Satan's ſubtilty) are greatly puzled about: but the chief fault is themſelves; let us endeavour to ſet you to rights, and all theſe matters in clear light, that ſo much ſtumble you, as to the uſe of means on your own part. And firſt (pray remember) by way of Conceſſion, that there is no man (without the mighty power of God, and his effectual Grace) can convert, and change his own corrupt Nature; this is granted. But then I ſay moreover, that where ever the Goſpel cometh, and is preached, as it is now (bleſſed be God) among us (there is none that I know of ſo much as queſtion it) but that all thoſe who enjoy it, and to whom it is preached, have ſuch a ſufficiency of means, and aids for Converſion

verſion and Salvation granted to them, a
is abundantly ſufficient to convict, condemn,
and leave wholly inexcuſable all thoſe that
are diſobedient to it, and remain uncon-
verted under it; that it was not ſo much
their *cannot*, as their *will not*, and *obſtinate*
refuſal, that is the proximate and immediate
cauſe of their non-converſion and unbelief.
John 3. 19. *This is the condemnation, Light is*
come into the World, and men love Darkneſs
rather than Light, becauſe their Deeds are
evil. John 5. 4. *And ye will not come unto*
me, that you might have Life. Jer. 8. 5. *They*
refuſe to return. And it is upon this Hypo-
theſis, that all thoſe melting, moving Expo-
ſtulations, and pleadings with Sinners, in
the Word of God, are raiſed and built: as for
inſtance, *Turn, turn ye, why will you dye?*
as I live, ſaith the Lord, I deſire not the Death
of a Sinner. Ezek. 33. 11. Chap. 18. 23.
Ceaſe to do evil, learn to do well, waſh you,
make ye clean: come now let us reaſon together,
ſaith the Lord, though your Sins be as Scarlet,
they ſhall be white as Snow; though they be
red like Crimſon, they ſhall be as Wool. Jer. 13.
27. *O Jeruſalem wilt thou not be made clean?*
when ſhall it once be?

Thus having cleared what lay in our way
as matter of Objection, and diſcouragement
touching the means of Converſion on our part,
I ſhall proceed to conſider (more particularly)
thoſe inſtituted means of Converſion; and
then

then ſhew you how your Luſts oppoſe thoſe means, and thereby hinder your Converſion. For the Means, I ſhall begin with that of *Conſideration*, and that becauſe I find the Holy Ghoſt in Scripture, beginning here with unconverted Sinners, commanding, and commending this as an excellent means of Converſion in the 1 *Kings* 8. 47. *If they ſhall bethink themſelves, and repent, then hear thou their Prayer*, &c. where you ſee plainly that retiring into our own hearts by ſerious thoughtfulneſs, and conſideration, is a ſingular means to Repentance and Converſion. Again in *Hag.* 1. 5. *Now therefore thus ſaith the Lord, Conſider your ways.* Pſal. 119. 59. *I thought on my ways, and turned my Feet unto thy Teſtimonies*: He firſt conſidered, and then he converted. So the prodigal Son came firſt to himſelf by conſideration, and then he came home to his Father by ſound Converſion. *Luke* 15. 17. Here the Lord complains of that People's impenitence, in *Jer.* 8. 6. *No man repented him*: And in the next words relateth the Cauſe of it to be want of conſideration, *No man ſaid, What have I done?* O would but young men retire from the Noiſe, and fooliſh Vanities of this world, and allow their Souls leiſure for the ſerious exerciſe of this important Duty; to conſider their ſinful and woful eſtate by Nature, in what poſture they ſtand God-wards with their apoſtate Natures; and how the Wrath of God that is revealed from Heaven againſt

all Unrighteousness; this wrath abideth on them every moment, during their unconverted state: and how fearful a thing it is to carry ones doom in ones own bosom! to go up and down the world in a state of enmity to the most high *Jehovah*, under his Curse and Wrath, as they most certainly do in their state of Nature, and there to consider of their manifold Omissions, and Commissions, how many thousand ways they have offended God; how many checks of Conscience they have stifled; what Motions of the Spirit they have resisted; what precious seasons of Grace they have neglected; what Light, Love, Mercies, Engagements, Vows they have sinned against; what pains they have taken to satisfie their Lusts, stopping their Ears at the holy Instructions, Counsels, Exhortations, intreaties of Parents & Ministers, what estrangedness, and separation their Sins have made between God and their Souls: and then to consider how short their time on Earth will be, how sure it is that their youthful Sins will sooner or later find them out; how certain that God will bring them to Judgment for all thy Pleasures in the Flesh, all thy Thoughts, Words and Deeds. That I say, would but young men take time to commune with their own Souls about these tremendous matters, it would surely awake and call them to fear, and enquire, *What must I do to be saved*? And so prepare them for that other Head of Consideration, namely

the rich, ſoveraign, and free Grace of God in Chriſt, laid open in the Goſpel; how God hath ſo loved the World, as to give his only Son to dye for us, when enemies; that whoſoever believeth, and repenteth, ſhall not periſh, but have everlaſting Life: how able and willing Chriſt is, to ſave, and receive all heavy laden weary Souls, that ſee themſelves loſt, and taſte the bitterneſs, and feel the burden of their Sin that come to him; how lovingly he invites all ſuch to come to him, and aſſureth them of a gracious reception, and a full remiſſion of all their Sins, and eternal Salvation, *&c.* and that it is not all the aggravations of their Sins, however they have been multiplied, and commited againſt the Light of Natural Conſcience, or the Light of Supernatural Grace revealed in the Scriptures, that ſhall be an impediment, or bar to their acceptance, and pardon upon their return: *If the Wicked forſake his way, and the Unrighteous man his Thoughts, and turn unto the Lord, he will have mercy, and to our God, and he will abundantly pardon, Iſa.* 55. 7. or multiply to pardon. Again, there is nothing but an unbelieving, impenitent Heart, reſiſting this Grace, can, or ſhall ever deprive you of ſo great Salvation, as is offered to you in the Goſpel: and tho' you have refuſed in paſt ſeaſons, when he hath called; yet for all that he won't refuſe you. If you flee from your luſts to him, the only refuge for loſt Souls, the match ſhall

not break on his part; and if you periſh, and miſs *Salvation* at laſt, it ſhall not be long of him. So that this is undeniable (*viz.*) that Conſideration on our part, is a moſt fit and apposite means of Converſion. I have ſometime read of a Religious Father, that had a rebellious wicked Son, that was a great grief to him; when the Father was on his death bed, he called his Son to him, and laid him under a ſolemn engagement and promiſe That he would every day retire alone, and ſpend one quarter of an Hour in ſerious thinking. After the pious Father was dead the wild Son began to conſider of his promiſe to his Father, and accordingly once a day retires; at firſt he began to think of the Honours, and Pleaſures of this World; but after a while he began to conſider, what his Father's deſign was, in obliging him thus once a day to retiredneſs and thoughtfulneſs and then he began to call to mind his Sins and wicked Life that he had lived: and the good Spirit of God concurring with thoſe thoughts, he became a new man. So that Conſideration is a means of Converſion.

Now I come in the next place to ſhew you how youthful luſts directly oppoſe this means of Converſion: and that will appear, if you conſider the rage of theſe Luſts, they will not give the judgment leave, or leiſure to animadvert, and conſider; they are impetuous, and tyrannical, hurrying poor Sinners Hell wards: this is obvious to our ob-

ſervation

ſervation every day; how many young people do we ſee, by one baſe pleaſure or other, always led captive from the time they awake in the Morning, till they lie down at Night, and never take time to conſider or ask themſelves, What have I done? What muſt I do to be ſaved? Where muſt I abide for ever? If a man rides through a Country full ſpeed, he can never draw a true Map of that Country: If you roile, and ruffle the Waters, you can never ſee your face in them. Thus if a Soul be hurried with its Luſts, it can never retire, and ſoberly debate matters in its own breaſt. Conſideration can find no place in ſuch a Soul, as Chriſt told the malicious *Jews*, in the 8. *John*, 36 37. *My words can find no place in you*; becauſe they were ſo enraged, and blinded with the luſts of Malice and Envy againſt him; that moſt pure, peaceable, meek, and heavenly Doctrine of the Goſpel, which Chriſt had taught among them, could have no entertainment in, nor government over their Hearts, to win them to him, becauſe their hearts were engaged to their Luſts. So is here, when God calls, and Miniſters call, and the dangers and miſeries of thy neer Soul calls, O young man, conſider thy ways, remember thy Creator, know that he will bring thee to Judgment: alas, thee luſts deafen and drown all. O wretched wery, tho' Life and Death be ſet before

thee, tho' thou art allured with all the glo rious promiſes of pardon, and Eternal Li on the one hand: and tho' thou art co ſtrained with all the Terrors of the Lord, th Curſes of the Law, and the everlaſting Flam of Hell on the other hand; yet theſe Luſ ſlight, & make nothing of all theſe amazin and tremendous Truths, as if they were n worthy of one quarter of an hours ſerio Conſideration: they do ſo haunt, an ſhackle poor Sinners, as that they hold the Priſoners (*arctâ cuſtodiâ*) in cloſe bonda and will not allow them the liberty of co ſideration, and bethinking themſelv Hence theſe Luſts are ſtiled Snares, Ne Bonds, *Eccleſ.* 7. 28. 2 *Tim.* 2. 26. and this reſpect are Sinners compared to Ca tives and Priſoners kept up. *Iſa.* 61. 1. a Chap. 42. 7. Hence *Simon Magus* by re ſon of his being under the dominion of th luſt of Covetouſneſs, tho' he was alſo und a *Chriſtian* profeſſion, and had been but j before Baptized; yet you read *Acts* 8. 23. *ſee* (ſaith *Peter*) *that thou art in the Gall Bitterneſs, and in the Bond of Iniquity.* A ſo that young man, of whom you read the 19. *Matth.* he ſeemed to be near to t Kingdom of Heaven, but he was chain faſt by the Love of Riches, and that ſet h quite back again. O young men, yo Luſts, if you give way to them, will b come ſo ravenous, outragious, and tyra

luſts malign Influences, what cauſe have you to Flee theſe Luſts!

Another means, on our part, of Converſion, is *Prayer*; thus we read in *Jer.* 31. 18, 19. of *Ephraim*, when he was about turning, he prayeth to the God of all Grace, *Turn thou me, and I ſhall be turned:* In this reſpect *Peter* counſels *Simon Magus*, Acts 8 22. *Repent* (ſaith he) *of this thy Wickedneſs, and Pray to God, if perhaps the Thought of thine Heart may be forgiven thee.* Pray mind this Scripture. *q. d.* though thou art in the very Gall of Bitterneſs, and in the Bond of Iniquity; yet ſuppoſing there remains only a poſſibility, a *perhaps* of Pardon and Salvation, yet thou art bound to Pray: I know there are many deboiſt, lewd Youngſters in this Age, that imitate thoſe prophane Wretches, of whoſe helliſh Language you read in the 21. *Job* 14, 15. *They ſay to the Almighty, Depart from us, we deſire not the knowledge of thy Ways: And what is the Almighty that we ſhould ſerve him? and what profit is it if we Pray to him?* But there is little hopes of their Converſion. However this is moſt certain, that Prayer is an Inſtitution of God's, in order to Converſion, as you may ſee in thoſe two Scriptures, *Hoſea* 14. 1, 2, 3. *O Iſrael, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou haſt fallen by thine Iniquities.* In that Verſe you have God's Invitation to Converſion; and then in the ſecond Verſe you have his Direction

rection how to go about it, *Take with you words, and turn unto the Lord, ſay unto him, Take away all Iniquity, and receive us graciouſly.* And then if you read that 36. *Ezek.* 26, 27. where you have God promiſing the Grace of Converſion, in thoſe words, *A new Heart will I give unto you*; and preſently enjoyning Prayer, as a means on our part, ver. 27. *Thus ſaith the Lord I will yet for this be ſought, by the Houſe of* Iſrael, *to do it for them.*

If you ask, What Prayer is?

I anſwer, Prayer is the offering up of our Deſires to God, for things agreeable to his Will, in the name of Chriſt. Theſe Deſires muſt proceed from an Heart touched with the ſenſe of our ſin and miſery, and the apprehenſion of God's mercy in Chriſt: and they muſt be fervent and conſtant; like the *Publican, God be merciful,* or propitious, to *me a Sinner, Luke* 18. and *Gen.* 32. 25. *I will not let thee go, except thou bleſs me.* Luke 18. 1. to this end our Saviour ſpake that Parable to inſtruct us, that we ought to *Pray and not faint:* like that important Woman of *Canaan,* who would know no diſcouragements, being once entred and engaged in this heavenly Exercile; *It is not meet* (ſaith our Lord) *to take Childrens Bread, and give it to Dogs:* ſhe owneth it, *Truth, Lord,* ſaith ſhe, *Matth.* 15. 26. *yet the Dogs may eat of the Crumbs that fall from their Maſters Table.*

O when a poor Sinner cometh to God by Christ, and knocketh for converting Grace, out of a ſenſe of its damned, undone condition: if he prevail not, and cryeth out, O thou moſt patient (tho' provoked) God, it's matter of admiration, that thou ſuffereſt ſuch a Viper as I am to live and breath in thy common Air: O pity me a Hell-deſerving Sinner, for the ſake of thy dear Son, who made ſatisfaction by his bitter Death and Paſſion to thy Juſtice, and grant me this favour in thy ſight, the forgiveneſs of my Sins, and the Spirit of Grace, to ſubdue the power of my luſts, and to renew me in Soul and Body: O Father of Mercies, if thou do not ſhew me this favour and mercy, I ſhall live thine enemy, and ſhall, I know not how ſoon, dye miſerably, to mine own eternal undoing. O draw me into Union with thy bleſſed Son, unto whom none can come except thou draw: O let me never reſt, till it be out of doubt, that I am converted, and that God in Chriſt is mine: let my Tears be my Meat night and day, while I have a being, till I obtain Grace and Mercy to help my needy miſerable Soul. After this manner is this Exerciſe to be performed, and it brings God's Inſtitution, it is under a promiſed Bleſſing, and many can ſet to their ſeals, that their labour herein hath not been in vain, with reference to Repentance and Converſion. Now giving way to youthful

luſt,

luſt, directly oppoſeth Converſion, both as it withdraws you from it, and withereth your Soul in the performance of it. Alas, when your Luſts grow clamorous, and you obſequious to them, they will breed in you an averſation & oppoſition to Prayer: you will not find a Heart inclined to, but wretchedly diſ-inclined from God, which is a ſad caſe indeed; and to have a hard Heart, that cannot Pray (was the note of an Eminent Saint, and Servant of God now aſcended) compleateth a Soul's miſery; it pulls down fury and deſtruction upon the Heads of ſuch; as you may ſee in the 10. *Jer.* 25. O what care ſhould you take to preſerve your comfortable acceſs to God by Chriſt every day: our Life is a worthleſs thing without it; hence in 1 *Pet.* 3. 7. the Apoſtle doth ſo earneſtly preſs Husbands and Wives to exemplary walking, *that your Prayers* (ſaith he) *be not hindred.* Now there is nothing ſo much hindereth Prayer, as giving way to your Luſts; for by theſe you provoke God to ſtop his Ear, and withdraw and ſtand at a diſtance from you, and by theſe you irritate the Rebellion of your own Hearts againſt God, and cauſe it to ſtand at a greater diſtance from God: as *Adam* when he yielded to eat of the forbidden Fruit, he grew ſhy of God. Woful experience evinceth this, when Perſons have given way to Pride, or Paſſion, or Luſt, or ſinful Pleaſures in the day, they can't

can't tell how to go and pray to God at night, or look him in the Face, with any comfort or confidence: when Conſcience upbraideth, doſt thou pray, O vile Hypocrite! haſt thou been kindling the Fire of his Wrath all day, anddoſt thou think to obtain his favour all of a ſudden? When thou haſt been grieving his Spirit, and tearing open the wounds of the bleſſed Jeſus, by thy wilful ſinning againſt Light, and Convictions, how canſt thou expect the Comforter ſhould come to thee? If a man were to plead for his Life at the Bar, would he be ſo mad as to diſtemper himſelf with ſtrong Drink before hand; this were the ready way to loſe him his Life: and ſo it is the ready way to loſe your Converſion, wherein ſtands the Life of your Souls, if you intoxicate them with the ſtupefying Vapours, that ariſe from your fulfilled Luſts. It was holy Mr. *Dod*'s ſaying, *That either Praying would make us leave off Sinning, or Sinning would make us leave off Praying.* And then pray obſerve, your Luſts tend to the manifeſt withering, cripling your Souls in the performance of this duty: It cuts and clips the Soul's wings in Prayer, and then down you fall, and ſink as a dead thing in Prayer. O therefore flee youthful Luſt, or they will render Prayer no more than a dead empty Formality; and how waſte and deſolate a thing is that? it will be like ſome Diſeaſe in the Body, that converts all the Food, that ſhould

nouriſh

nouriſh Nature, to the feeding themſelves, and ſo macerate, and miſerably conſume the Body; or like ſome Thief, or Thieves in a Houſe, the Maſter's Goods and Stock continually waſte and conſume: and no wonder, the Viper is in their own Boſoms. Thus, young men, your Luſts will bring leanneſs into your Souls in Prayer. O young man, doſt thou find the Lord gone in Prayer, no diſcoveries of himſelf, but a great eſtrangedneſs: wouldſt thou know the cauſe? read that in *Ezek.* 14. 5. *They were eſtranged through their Luſts.* Be aſſured of this, there is a Heart-league, and ſome youthful Luſt or other, which lays an embargo upon the Soul, and arreſts the profit of all thy Prayers. Suppoſe a man did know, and ſee his own Wife loving and cleaving to ſome other man; would not this ſpoil the comfort of their communion? as we that are reaſonable Creatures, don't love to be among unreaſonable Brutes in the Wilderneſs, or the Living to be among the Tombs and the Dead: So a holy God regards not the Prayers, will not be enquired of, nor ſpoke with, by thoſe who regard their Luſts in their Hearts, *Iſa.* 58. 1, 2, 3, 4. *Why have we faſted, and thou regardeſt not? You took pleaſure, ſaith the Lord, and brake not the Bonds of Wickedneſs.* So ſome complain, Alas! we have prayed for Pardon, and Peace, and the Manifeſtations of God's Love, but have received no anſwer, find no return; now whence

whence is this? Oh young man, ſure there is ſome betwitching Luſt or other ſucks thee. As if I ſaw a Plant or Tree that is daily watered, and has no want of outward means of flouriſhing, and bearing Fruit; yet withereth, and dyeth away, be ſure there is ſome Worm in the Root corroding it. I have heard of late many young People pouring out their Complaints after this manner, *Alas, I have been ſeeking, and knocking at the door of Ordinances, Prayer, Word, Sacrament, &c. but have not, find not, feel not ſupplies come in: I am like thoſe that had been toiling all Night, and catch nothing. Oh never was my Heart ſo dead in Duty*, ſaith one: *ſo ſtraitned, and ſhut up*, ſaith another! And hence ſome cry out, *To what purpoſe ſhould we wait any longer? What profit is there in Praying to the Almighty? What ſweetneſs in Ordinances? What is Chriſt more than another?* Now, I pray whence is this? What is Chriſt a barren Wilderneſs? a Land of Darkneſs? a broken Ciſtern? a Field without a Treaſure? a Well without Water? a Cloud without Rain? What is the Lord unwilling to hear? and pitty a poor diſtreſſed Sinner, that comes and makes its moan to him? And is it in vain to ſeek him? Oh no! Chriſt is precious, God is gracious, the hearer of Prayers, the rewarder of ſuch as diligently ſeek him. But here is the true cauſe of all, a man comes to God with his Idol in his Heart, and then God will not ſpeak with him;

him; can you ever imagin that ſo pure Majeſty ſhould match with your Luſts? no no, for then ſhould the Father of Light have communion with the darkeſt Darkneſs: ſooner will he leave thee, while thou liveſt to be a Shrub, or Heath in the Deſert that ſees not when Good cometh, and to be a *magor Miſſabib* when thou dieſt; than ever let thee in to acquaintance with himſelf, till the league and power of thy youthful Luſts be broke. *Can two walk together that are not agreed? No man can ſerve two Maſters: but either he will love the one, and hate the other*, &c. Matth. 6. 24. O be not deceived, God is not mocked: if you regard Iniquity in your hearts, God won't hear your Prayer. Poſſibly thou art pinch'd, through the power of a natural Conſcience flying in thy face, telling thee that ſuch Luſts will ſink thee at laſt; and this ſends thee to thy Knees, and then thou crieſt, *Lord, Lord, there be theſe, and theſe youthful Luſts of mine that wring my Conſcience, that I can have no quiet; O eaſe me of them.* And thus thou ſeekeſt out to pacifie and ſtop the Mouth of Conſcience, and that's all: never comeſt up up to practiſe this Rule, to flee theſe Luſts but ever likeſt, loveſt, and liveſt them never ſell all, part with all, and ſo run divorced from them all, to Chriſt, taking his bleſſed Yoke upon thee, ſaying, *He, and he alone ſhall rule and reign in them, and over them*

them. Oh that ſuch would ponder that Text, *James* 1. 7, 8. Let not a double-minded man think to receive any thing at the hands of the Lord; and that other place in 1. *Iſaiah* 10 to 14. *I am weary* (ſaith the Lord there) *of your New-Moons, and your very Aſſembling is provoking to me, while your Hands and Hearts are unclean, and full of ſin: waſh ye, make ye clean,* &c. The truth is, your youthful Luſts in Prayer, do render you moſt abominable and odious in the ſight of God: for they do (as it were) challenge, and bid defiance to God; whence elſe are thoſe thunders of his provoked Majeſty? in 1. *Mala.* 14. 7. *Jer.* 9, 15, 16. 33. *Ezek.* 31, 32, 33. Chap. 14. from the 1ſt. verſe to the 9. To go and Pray with the Idol of my Luſt in my heart, is a mocking God, and God won't be mocked; nay, let me tell you, God's anger is increaſed by ſuch Prayers, and then I appeal to you what Good can be looked for from ſuch Prayers? alas, rather Confuſion, than Converſion. O young People, pray remember it, your Luſts will not only blunt, and take off the edge of Prayer, that it ſhall never do any execution; but they turn thy very Prayers into ſin, and how likely that is to turn thy heart Godwards, judge ye.

Thus I have ſhewed you how your youthful Luſts hinder Converſion, as they oppoſe the means of it. Were there a demand made,

why *Consideration*, and *Prayer*, and othe
Godly means should be so irksome, and bur
densom? Is God so undelightful an objec
to approach unto, that you cannot endu
his presence, or are so soon weary in hol
Exercises, like a man under a heavy load
Oh no, to draw nigh to God in Prayer, is th
joy of holy Souls; but they are those Lus
within that make it (to our corrupt Nature
so unpleasant, and tedious. And thus
have shewed you, how they oppose th
means of Conversion on our part; and there
fore it is a duty of such special concernme
for young men to flee youthful Lusts, becau
of the malignity of their influence, expresse
first in that they hinder Conversion. No
I come to the second Head, to shew yo
the malignity of their influence as they hu
ry Youth into grievous Temptations.

2. A second particular of the malignit
of youthful Lusts inflence lieth in this, vi
In that they hurry Youth into grievo
Temptations.

There are two sorts of Temptations th
we read of in Scripture, the Apostle *Jam*
treats of both, in the 1. chap. ver. 2. and 1
14. The former sort are no other than Aff
ctions, which are for the probation an
tryal of the *Christian's* Faith and Patienc
and with respect to these the Apostle sait
*My Brethren count it all Joy, when you fa
into divers Temptations*, ver. 2. And *Mo*
sait

faith, that God tempted *Abraham*, 22. *Gen.* 1. That is God proved, and tryed his Servant *Abraham's* Faith. But now the other ſort of Temptations, are no other than ſolicitations and ſeducements to Sin; and with reſpect to theſe, the Apoſtle ſaith in the 13. and 14. verſes. *Let no man ſay when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with Evil, neither tempteth he any man. But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own Luſt, and enticed; then when Luſt hath conceived, it bringeth forth Sin, and Sin when it is finiſhed, bringeth forth Death.* And hence our bleſſed Lord teacheth us *to watch and pray, that we enter not into Temptation*; that is to ſin; for in this ſenſe is the word uſed in Scripture, as δοκιμάζειν, or to try, is the proper word for the other temptation; ſo πειράζειν is the proper word for temptation to ſin. And of this ſort of temptation it is that youthful Luſts are both the *Fons*, and *Fomes*, the breeder, and feeder, the food and fuel, the mother and nurſe, they do both by force and fraud, violently hale, and hurry, and cunningly entice, and draw young ones to ſin. The Devil may flatter you, but he cannot force you: it's your Luſt that opens the Door, or temptation could never enter. It hath been an old practice of Sinners, when they fall into ſin, to accuſe and lay all the blame either upon the Devil, or the

inſtrument that provoked them. *Oh*, ſa
they, *the Devil owed them a ſpight, and no*
he hath paid it; not conſidering that th
true procreating cauſe of Sin, is a mans ow
Luſt. It muſt be own'd that this World
full of Snares and Temptations, to wit
draw Youth from God's houſe, to the Al
houſes, and there provoke them to Intemp
rance: and to Gaming houſes, and the
provoke them to conſume their Eſtates, an
precious time: and to filthy houſes, an
there provoke them to deſtroy themſelv
for the ſake of brutiſh pleaſures. In this ſen
it is true, *homo homini dæmon*: One is a D
vil to another, *i.e.* tempters to Sin. But
theſe are but external movers, the princip
Agent is thy own Luſt within. As one ſait
'Temptation is a Siege, Satan is the Enem
'without the Walls, labouring to force
'entrance; our Luſts are the Traytors wit
'in, that hold correſpondency with t
'Enemy without, and open the Gate of t
'Soul to receive him. They are our ow
Luſts that go over to Satan, in the day
battel, and fight againſt our Souls, 1 *Pet.* 2.
O young men, your Luſts are like the m
of *Keilah* to *David*, in the day of tempt
tion, 1 *Sam.* 23. 11. Poor *David* was hate
and hunted up and down by *Saul*, who ſoug
his Life: at length he cometh to *Keilah*
preſently it was told *Saul*, that *David* w
come to *Keilah*. *David* enquireth of the Lor
Wheth

Whether the men of Keilah *would deliver him up into the hands of his Enemy* Saul? *And the Lord ſaid, They will deliver thee up.* Whereupon *David* preſently fled, and ſo eſcaped. Thus if you follow not this counſel, to flee your youthful luſts, they will certainly deliver you up in the hour of temptation, that you will not be able to deliver your own Soul: they will betray you, as *Dalilah* did *Sampſon*, and let in the uncircumciſed *Philiſtines* upon you. When *Judas* his heart was ſet upon the luſt of Covetouſneſs, how miſerably was he overcome, with many deſperate Temptations, he will betray the precious Life, and Blood of the Son of God, for thirty pieces of Silver, and afterward you know what became of him; ſo true is that in the 1 *Tim. 6. 9, 10. They that will be rich* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *whoſe Hearts run after their Covetouſneſs, fall into Temptation, and a Snare, into many fooliſh and hurtful Luſts.* So when *Balaam*'s Heart was ſet upon this Luſt, he will riſe early, run, and ride till he is weary, that he might Curſe *Iſrael*; at length he becomes (through his Luſt) more deſperate, and ſenſeleſs of God's fury, than the dumb Aſs, he diſſembles his Conſcience, coins cunning Evaſions. O the malignity of luſts influence! Suppoſe it be the Luſt of Uncleanneſs, what pernicious temptation doth this caſt many young men upon? frequenting Satan's Seminaries, thoſe

Chappels of Hell, Stews and Plays, where oftentimes are Challenges, Stabs, Combat Blood, and Murder: thus have many ventured as deep as Hell, to gratifie their filthy Lusts. Hence they are said to *draw Iniquity as with Cart-ropes*, Isa. 5. 8. and that *they wearied themselves to commit Iniquity*, Jer. 9. and compared to *fed Horses, every one neighed after his Neighbours Wife*, Jer. 5. 8. and carried on with a bruitish rage, against reason, without any counsel, or consideration; this is that which the Apostle calleth πάθος ἐπιθυμίας the eagerness of Lust, noteth a raging eagerness. 1 *Thes.* 4. 5. that, where it is consented to, it carrieth all before it, breaks all sorts of Bonds, the Law of God, the Law of Nature; all are but as three new Cords, wherewith *Sampson* was bound, as soon as he awoke from Sleep, he brake all like so many twine Threads. An instance hereof holy Providence, while I am writing, affords me, of a young man, that through yielding to the Lust of Concupiscence, hath plunged himself into such dreadful Temptations, and consuming Miseries that he moves like a Shadow, and pines away under the malignity of his Lusts influence, to the grief of them that behold him. The holy Apostle telleth us, *That when Lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth Sin*, that is the outward act of Sin, *and when Sin is finished, it bringeth forth Death*. The Metaphor

taphor there uſed, is taken from a teeming Mother: now a Mother conceiveth firſt inwardly, and after the revolution of ſo many Months, bringeth forth the Fruit of her Womb viſibly to others; thus here, according to that noted place, *Matth.* 15. 19. *Out of the Heart proceed evil Thoughts, Murders, Adulteries, Fornications, Thefts, falſe Witneſs, Blaſphemies.* So in 2 *Peter* 1. 4. all the actual Corruptions and Abominations that are in the world, are through Luſt. Oh there is a vaſt difference between our Lord Jeſus his being tempted, and ours; when Satan came to tempt him, he found nothing in him, *John* 14. 13. nothing to comply with him, there was no internal temper, no indwelling luſt, no corrupt matter to faſten on: but it is otherwiſe with us, *A man's Enemies* (ſaith Chriſt) *are they of his own Houſe.* O remember it, young man, the principal Cauſe of all thy miſery, is the Luſt of thy own Heart, if all outward obſtacles were removed, thou mayſt yet be an Adulterer, a Thief, *&c.* in the ſight and account of God, as one hath it,

Omnia ſi claudas, intus adulter erit.

Moreover, conſider the malignity of theſe Luſts, as they have a ſly, ſubtile, enticing property, you will ſee a neceſſity of fleeing them. O young man, thy Luſts are as deceit-

deceitful to betray you with Smiles, and Kisses, as they are violent, and desperate to stab you with temptations to bold and bloody perpetrations of sin. Your Lusts not only tempt by haling, and hurrying you on to sin in an impetuous manner, but they also tempt you by flattery, and putting Tricks and Cheats upon you; insomuch that it is next to impossible, that you should ever flee, and avoid the Cheats, except you flee your Lusts that are the cheaters. Ah how many thousand of young ones hath Lust slain this way; fitly may that be applied here that is spoken of the Harlot in *Prov.* 7. 26. *She hath cast down many wounded. Solomon* was a wise man, yet Lust made a fool of him; Lust hath much of the subtilty of the old Serpent in its blinding Sinners minds, it draweth young men to sin, by drawing a vail over their Consciences; thus enticing them on with fair & flattering Promises, one while pleading the sweetness and pleasure of yielding, and giving way to its desires and solicitations; at other times arguing *ab utili*, the profit, and gain, the honour, and preferment. Hence the voluptuous, and unwary Youth are ensnared, as you read frequently in the *Proverbs* 1. Chap. and the 7. Chap. promising themselves abundance of satisfaction, in yielding to their Lusts. 18. ver. of that 7. of the *Prov. Come let us take our fill, and solace our selves with Loves.*

Stolen Waters are ſweet, and Bread eaten in ſecret is pleaſant, Prov. 9. 17. Doth *Ahab* ſell himſelf to his Luſts to work wickedneſs? what *gratis*? Oh no, his luſts promiſe him a brave Vineyard. So *Gehazi*, what will he frame and utter a Lye for nothing? Oh no, he ſhould have Sheep, and Oxen, and change of Rayment, *&c.* So *Achan*, what will he ſin for nothing? Oh no, there's a Wedge of Gold. So *Judas*, what will he betray innocent Blood for nothing? Oh no, he ſhall have thirty Pieces of Silver. Thus doth Luſt tempt by flattery & fraud, and all is a meer Cheat; for, pray, what got *Ahab* by his Vineyard? was it not the ruin of him and his? oh it brought forth Grapes of Gall. And what got *Gehazi* by his Lye, but a Leproſie entailed upon him, and his Heirs for ever? And what got *Achan* by his Wedge? It is the notion of one upon it, *That it was a wedge to cleave aſunder his Soul from God:* And I may add, to cleave aſunder his Soul from his Body too. So *Judas* his thirty pieces purchaſed him an Halter. Thus for a luſts pleaſure, multitudes of Youth are tempted into it by meer flattery, as you may ſee in the 20. *Job* 12. 14. *Though Wickedneſs be ſweet in the Mouth, yet the Meat thereof will turn to the Gall of Aſps within.* And in *Prov. 9. 17. Stolen Waters are ſweet*, &c. but they *conſider not, that the Dead are there, and that her Gueſts are in*

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the Depths of Hell. I have read a Story o
a *Roman* Soldier, who was by a Coun
Marſhal condemned to dye for breaking hi
rank, to ſteal a Bunch of Grapes; and a
he was going to execution, ſome of th
Soldiers envied him, that he had Grape
and they had none, (ſaith he) *Do ye em*
me my Grapes, I muſt pay dear for them. S
may we ſay of all the pleaſure of your Luſt
its laſt act is always Tragical, it ſerveth th
young man as *Abſolom* did *Amnon*, whe
his Heart was merry with Wine, then h
killed him, 2 *Sam.* 13. 28. Or as *Jael*, ſh
enticed him into her Tent, and gave hi
Milk, and layeth him to ſleep; and then *Sh*
put her Hand to the Nail, and with the Hamme
ſhe ſmote Siſera, *ſhe ſmote off his Head, whe*
ſhe had pierced, and ſtricken through hi
Temples, Judg. 5. 26. O young men, fl
your Luſts, yield not to their enticement
when they would draw, and tempt yo
with the bait of pleaſure; remember ther
is no truth in all its promiſes. Oh practi
that 3 *Heb.* 13. O venture not upon th
forbidden Cup, when it ſparkleth with plea
ſure. Your Luſts will promiſe you a Para
diſe, and pay you with a bryary and thor
ny Wilderneſs, where if you have a min
to be torn with Buſhes, fed with Aſhe
ſtung with Serpents, ſcorch'd with Burning
and that everlaſting, you may credit the
youthful Luſts. And this brings me to th
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third and *laſt* Particular, expreſſive of the malignity of youthful Luſts influence, *viz.* That they haſten your Deſtruction.

3. Flee youthful Luſts, becauſe of the malignity of their influence, in that they not only hinder your Converſion, hurry you into Temptation; but in the laſt place, in that they haſten your deſtruction, as you may read in theſe following Scriptures, *Rom.* 6. 21. *What fruit had ye then in thoſe things, for the end of them is Death?* And in verſe 23. *The Wages of Sin is Death.* 1 Pet. 1. 11. *Abſtain from Fleſhly Luſts, which war againſt the Soul.* Rom. 8.13. *If ye live after the Fleſh, ye ſhall dye.* Matth. 18. 8, 9. *If thy right Hand offend thee, cut it off,* &c. or no entring into Life eternal, *Iſa.* 3. 10. Now in vain were all theſe Revelations of the determined and immutable Will of God in his Word, if continuance in your Luſts, could ſtand with impunity, and eſcaping deſtruction. I know that the vain hopes of eſcaping, is a mighty encouragement to the voluptuous Youth, whoſe Heart ſtands bent upon his Luſts; but if once his Conſcience comes to be throughly convinced, that his luſts will moſt ſurely find him out, that his Damnation lingreth not, ſlumbreth not, but is haſtening apace towards him; ſo that he may as well hope not to dye, as not to be thrown into Hell when he dyes: oh then what trembling ſurpriſeth

the guilty Sinner. Now in order to the awakening the Conſcience of wild and wanton Youth, to flee their youthful Luſts, let them but weigh this Argument taken out of God's Word, who hath peremptorily declared, that he will by no means clear the Guilty; but is angry with them every day, and hath revealed his Wrath from Heaven, againſt all that perſiſt in their Luſts, let them ſteep their thoughts in ſuch terrible & tremendous Scriptures, as *Deut.29.* 18, 19, 20. *Leſt there ſhould be any among you, whoſe Heart turneth away from the Lord, and it cometh to paſs that when he heareth* (or readeth) *the Words of this Curſe, that he bleſs himſelf in his Heart, ſaying, I ſhall have Peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine Heart to add ſin to ſin.* What then? O pray mind, and lay to heart what followeth in the 20. verſ. *The Lord will not ſpare him, but then the anger of the Lord and his jealouſie ſhall ſmoke againſt that man, and all the Curſes that are written in this Book ſhall lie upon him*: Alſo in *Job* 5. 3, 4. *Eliphaz* ſaith, *I have ſeen the Fooliſh taking root, but ſuddenly I curſed his Habitation:* and in the 27. Chap. and 13. you read, *this is the Portion of a wicked man with God*: and in 17. Chap. 5. *Their triumphing is but ſhort, and their joy but for a moment.* So that as ſoon ſhould God ceaſe to be God, as the Sinner that goeth on in his Treſpaſſes, ſhould

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go unpuniſhed, the certainty of whoſe deſtruction depends upon the irrevocable Will of God: God hath ſaid it, the Lord hath ſpoken it, and it ſhall come to paſs. Alas we that dwell at eaſe, and enjoy our health, are not able fully to conceive, what the power of the Lord's anger and wrath is, which he hath revealed againſt Sin, and Sinners. Some indeed as they have been drawing near, and launching out into the Ocean of Eternity, have had ſuch ſights and views of it, as hath ſcar'd, and affrighted them with ſuch amazements, that they have cryed out (*inducias uſq; ad mane*) truce but till the Morning: Others, *O that I had never been born, call time again*: Others, *O Lord, let me live on Earth, though it be but the life of a Toad.* I have alſo read of one, who ſaw Hell, but in a Dream, or Viſion, and the terror was ſo great, that he would have choſen ten times to dye, rather than ſee and feel ſo great horror again. But as to our Youth that look at a Death-Bed many years off, they can ſcarce imagine what an aſpect this will have at a dying hour. Now at preſent it ſhews its faireſt ſide, but when all Masks are pulled off, it will be quite another thing; you may ſee its ſtinging efficacy in the 33. *Iſa.* and 14. Now in the days of your vanity and pleaſure, this Argument and Reaſon is wrapt up like a Flag about the Staff: Hell and Damnation are but as

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it were *in ſemine*, and your perſiſting in Sin is called a treaſuring up of Wrath againſt that great and terrible Day of Wrath that is approaching; and hence you are ſecure, careleſs, and all quiet. But oh that young people would but think what a dreadful ſight it will have, when they come to lie down with their Bones full of the Sins of their youth, and their Souls brought down to the ſides of the Pit, as low as Hell, by their youthful luſts. O with what unexpreſſible rage and fury will their Conſciences then reflect on their fore-paſt Sins! You read in *James*, that when Luſt is conſummate, it bringeth forth Death, and the ſting of Death is Sin unmortified, unpardoned, & this brings to a terrible Bar, Judge, and Sentence, *Depart ye curſed*, &c. So that here in the final iſſue of your youthful luſts, they will (if you flee them not) caſt you into the Fire of Hell, with an utter deſtruction from the preſence of the Lord. See here how God hath hedged up your ſinful way with thorns to ſtop you, and reſtrain you from yielding to your filthy and forbidden Luſts; and alſo to ſpur you on to break through all the difficulties and objections that lie in your way to Repentance and Converſion; that ſo when the Devil, or the Luſts of the Fleſh object againſt the ſeverities, pains and labour of abandoning and forſaking your *Dalilah*-corruptions, you

might

might have it in readineſs to anſwer, Avoid Satan, what tell you me of pains in parting with, or departing from Sin; do not you ſee here in the Scripture, is it not written, that Eternal Pains will be my Portion, if I flee not my youthful luſts? and what are the pains of parting with my luſts now, compared with the pains of parting with God, Chriſt, and Heaven, and the undergoing the pains of Hell's torments, the Fire that is never quenched, the Worm that never dyes? O Devil, that wouldſt tempt me to ſin; O vile Luſt that wouldſt entice me, and draw me to fulfil your unreaſonable requeſt, is it eaſie to dwell with everlaſting Burning? If I dwell with you, and hearken to you, if I flee you not, I muſt dwell and lodge for ever and ever in *Tophet*. Is it not better to dwell with Lyons, Bears, Serpents, Adders, here in a Wilderneſs all my Life on Earth, than abide with you an hour longer? ſeeing that I run the hazard of an Eternity of Torments in that hour, and the only way to provoke God to ſhorten my Life on Earth, is to yield to my luſts. What if I ſhould gain a little beaſtly pleaſure, or periſhing earthly treaſure, by obeying my youthful luſt? what then? when God takes away my Soul, *Job* 27.7, 8. and in *Matth.* 16. 25, 26. *What is a man profited though he ſhould gain the whole World, and loſe his own Soul? What can a man give in exchange*

exchange for his Soul? Wherefore as *Moſes* ſpake unto the Congregation of *Iſrael* in the caſe of *Korah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, ſaying, *Depart I pray you from the Tents of wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, leſt ye be conſumed in all their Sins.* So I ſay to you, young people, flee your wicked luſts, touch nothing of them, leſt you be conſumed. It was good counſel the Angel gave *Lot*, *Flee out of* Sodom, *eſcape for thy Life, look not behind thee, leſt thou be conſumed in her Flames.* But it's more merciful counſel to you to flee your youthful luſts, inaſmuch as it's better the Body were ſwallowed up in the Earth, or burnt to Aſhes in Flames, than that your Souls and Bodies ſhould be ſwallowed up in *Tophet*, and burnt in the Lake of Fire and Brimſtone, world without end, as moſt certainly if you flee not your luſts, they muſt be. O young people, if you ſtay with your luſts, they will undo you, Soul and Body, for ever. Who would not flee from Plague, Fire, Sword, Famine, *&c.*? Alas your Luſts are worſe than all theſe; while you abide in them, *the Wrath of God abideth on you*, John 3. 36. its all being within the reach of the Wrath of God, within the fall of his ſtorm. O what is it then to be juſt under it? *Amos* 2. 14. How much more deſireable were it to lie open to famine, Peſtilence, Bloodſheds, *&c.* than to be expoſed to the Storms, and ſtrokes of God's

God's vengeance. Oh what is there in your Lusts, that should so bewitch you, as to venture your eternal ruin and destruction for them? and judge ye, whether it be possible for any one of you, to do any thing more directly to the ruin of himself, (tho' you should study for it seven years) than to go on impenitently in the fulfilling thy Lusts. That judgment that in it self is slow, and your living in a course of Sin, most certainly hasteneth its execution. It's true, God may grant you further patience, but you cannot promise your selves an hours patience, you are not sure of being out of Hell one hour longer. But if God should spare thee some years, as is the Case proposed by *Solomon*, in that of *Eccles.* 8. 12. *Tho' a Sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged*, yet what then? shall it go well? Oh no, as it followeth, *surely it shall not go well with him. The Iniquity of* Ephraim (saith the Lord) *is bound up*, Hos. 13. 12. And in Psal. 50. *I held my peace* (saith God) *and thou thoughtest me such an one as thy self: but I will reprove thee, and set thy sin in order before thee.* This is enough to make a Sinner's Loins to tremble, to consider, that in the day of God's patience, while he continueth impenitent, it is no other than *a treasuring up wrath against the great and terrible day of wrath.* Oh! how many of our brisk and jovial Youngsters fancy they shall

hear no more of their Vanities and Senſuali-
ties; becauſe God hath born with them in
their paſt Follies, they conclude all's over
and done with: But be it known to you,
God hath (as *Job* ſpeaketh) ſealed up your
youthful Sins in a Bag againſt the day of
Judgment, in which day God will reckon
with you for all, even from the Sin that
clave to you in your Mothers womb, to the
laſt Sin you commit in this World. If you
flie not your Luſts by Repentance, there is
no flying Divine Vengeance. If you adven-
ture to cry Peace, Peace, behold ſwift and
ſudden deſtruction is coming upon you, ac-
cording to the unalterable Law of the great
God, Pſal. 68. 21. *But God ſhall wound the*
head of his enemies, and the hairy ſcalp of
every one that goeth on in his treſpaſſes: and
in *Luke* 19. 27. O the malign influence of
their Luſts! there is no flying future wrath
except you flie your preſent Luſts. Future day
ſtay, alas it's in part come; for God is (as I told
you) angry every day, and his wrath abi-
deth on you in the threathing every mo-
ment; how ſoon execution may be,
who knoweth? methinks it's like a Ma-
factor's being upon the Ladder, there want
nothing but turning off, and he is gone.
Conſider, *What a fearful thing it is to fall*
into the hands of a living God? Hebr. 10.
Then how glad would you be to flie out of
his hands if you could? as you read

Job 27. 22. yea, how fain would ſuch flee to the Rocks, Mountains, Hills, and there be glad if they would but fall upon them, to cover and hide them from the wrath of a Sin-revenging God? *Rev.* 6. 15, 16. Now God commands you to flee Sin, and ſo make an eſcape from the fulneſs of wrath to come: But if you be contentious and diſobedient, why then he himſelf will not let you eſcape, *Hebr.* 2. 3. That's a ſtartling Queſtion in *Iſa.* 10. 3. *And what will you do in the day of viſitation, and in the deſolation which ſhall come from far? to whom will you flee for help? and where will you leave your glory?* methinks that other Scripture in *Job* 5. 1. might put you in fear; *Call now, and ſee if there be any that will anſwer thee, and to which of the Saints wilt thou turn?* Alas! the Wiſe Virgins could not help the Fooliſh to a drop of Oil; no, no, Saints and Angels have but enough for themſelves, they be ſure can't help you, and be ſure God won't, he hath poſitively told you ſo, in *Prov.* 1. 28. *Then ſhall they call, and cry, and ſeek, but I will not hear, becauſe I called, and they refuſed.* From the 20*th. verſe*, to the 24*th.* of that *Chapter*, you have the Riches of Grace diſplayed on God's part, in calling prodigal Youth to Repentance. And from the 24*th.* to the 26*th. verſes*, you have on the Sinners part, the malignity and poyſon of youthful Luſts expreſſed in their refuſal. And then

from the 26th. to the 33d. you have the Epitomy of all Misery; *Then shall you call on me, but I will not answer*, &c. O that young Men did but see the Truth of this, *viz.* the certain and sure destruction that they are pulling down upon their own heads, while they embrace their Lusts. When the Disciples saw themselves in danger of drowning, they earnestly solicited their Lord and Master Christ *to save them*, *Matth.* 8. 25. But do you hear young Men? you are in greater danger than drowning, you are in danger of damning. When *Job* was under some fearful apprehensions of this, see how pathetically he takes on, in Job 10. 1, 2. *I am weary of my life, I will speak in the bitterness of my soul. I will say unto God, Do not condemn me.* When *Nineveh* heard this Argument of destruction hastening within 40 days, O how were they concerned; they proclaim a Fast, and cloath themselves in Sackcloth, confess and forsake their Sins, *&c.* O Young Men, Are you tempted by the delights of Sense? then place these Terrors of the Lord against those sensual Joys. Let me ask you, Could you be content to be cast into scalding Lead for a Banquet of Wine? Or for a drop of Pleasure upon Earth, to have an Ocean of Torment in Hell? See *Luke* 16. 25. *Son remember thou in thy life-time hadst thy good things, and* Lazarus *his evil things; now he is* com-

comforted, and thou art tormented. So that hence you see the Reasons why it is a Duty of such special Concernment, for young People to flee their youthful Lusts, because of the propriety of their inherence, and the malignity of their influence; and that particularly as they hinder their Conversion, hurry them into grievous Temptations, and hasten their destruction, which brings me to the last Question.

Quest. 4. and last: *How young People may best practise this their special Duty*, viz. *To flee youthful Lusts.*

Answ. Before I proceed to the consideration of distinct Rules and Remedies suitable to each particular Sin that Youth stands inclined to, I shall, by way of Premise, lay down one general Rule, which will be of unanswerable advantage to you, if it be duly attended unto: And I do beseech you in the Bowels of Christ, as you will answer the denial of so reasonable a Request, at the Judgment Seat of Christ, before the great God and Soveraign Judge both of quick and dead, that you will make a Stand, and deliberately bethink your selves about it, allowing your poor Souls therein some due proportion of time, as the weight and importance of this Rule requires, which is as followeth, *viz.*

See that in the first place, there be the ground work of Regeneration, and sound Conver sion of your Souls to God. The success o all other means will depend on this; an the fatal miscarriages of both young and ol in the matters of Religion, principally ari from a Non-attendency to this: For want this it is, that there suddenly spring up many rotten Professors, so many *almost* an *half*-Christians, such multitudes that after season fall from their Profession, and gro loose and vain, *turning the grace of God in wantonness*, and *returning with the dog to i vomit*, and *with the swine to the wallowin again in the mire*; *twice dead, plucked up the roots*, as *Jude* speaketh, *ver.* 12. To m it hath been a most startling Spectacle; in m time I have seen some young ones awake ed, and galled in their Consciences, in much that they have not been able to refra crying out, and under the efficacy an strength of these Convictions, they have v gorously gone to work, making Vows an Promises, *O what they would be and do time to come*, &c. That one would hav thought, they would never have been Slav and Drudges to their Lusts any more. An I verily believe, at that time, if any shou have told them, that within a few month they would become such Apostates from Enemies to the ways of God, they would certainly have said with *Hazael*, *Are we*

that we ſhould ever do ſo? Yet I have ſeen it, all their early Goodneſs hath proved but as an early Dew, and a morning Cloud. Now whence is this? Or to what can it be more reaſonably and truly imputed, than to this grand Error in the Foundation? *viz.* Their Natures were never changed by converting Grace, there never had been the implantation of a Principle of ſaving Faith, in grafting them into Chriſt: *Can the ruſh grow without mire? or the flag without water?* ſaith *Bildad*, in *Job* 8. 11. So here: Can it ever be expected that Convictions ſhould be maintained and improved to a right, regular, and conſtant abandoning your Sins, without a Principle of ſound Converſion? As ſoon may the Bird flie without Wings, or a Man run without Legs, or move up and down without Life, as you can aright flee your Luſts without a Principle of Grace. *Fleeing*, I told you, (in the opening the words) imported *a ſpiritual motion from Sin, to God*; now, in all *ſpiritual motion*, there muſt be a *ſpiritual life*. Beſides, this is God's Order, as you may ſee in *Ezek.* 36. 26, *&c.* firſt it runs, *I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new ſpirit within you*, there is the Principle of renewing Grace; and then it followeth, *I will cauſe you to walk in my ſtatutes*, there is the heavenly motion. The truth is, all other helps will in the iſſue prove helpleſs; and all attempts to ſubdue

their Luſts, on leſs and lower Principles tha
thoſe of Regeneration, and Faith cloſin
with the perſon of Chriſt, ſo as to unite th
Soul to him, will all, ſooner or later, bewra
their Vanity, like thoſe that labour in th
very Fire, and there is no profit in all the
labour; or like thoſe ſilly People, *that a*
ever learning, but never come to the knowled
of the Truth, remaining in the very gall
bitterneſs, and bond of iniquity. Hence ou
Saviour firſt expoſtulates, and asks the Qu
ſtion in *Matth.* 6. 16. *Can Men gather Grap*
on Thorns? And in *Matth.* 12. 33. and th
he anſwers it, and determines; *Make*, ſai
he, *the Tree good, and the Fruit will*
good.

I have often thought, what pity it is, th
ſo many Prayings, Faſtings, Solemn Aſſem
blings, Tears, *&c.* ſhould all be in vain, an
fruitleſs, and never reach the end, *viz.* Et
nal Life, but end in the loſs of the Soul, an
of God for ever. O young People, if in an
thing you need a light to guide your Feet
the way of Life, it is here, to ſee the utt
impoſſibility of ever being effectually divo
ced from Sin, without Union to and wi
Chriſt, and the Inhabitation of the Spirit
Grace, transforming and renewing you
your minds. An imperfect work, havin
ſome apprehenſion of Sin and Miſery, an
ſome fears and affections for a ſeaſon, an
then ſome apprehenſions and hopes of Me

cy, and all these without being humbled throughly, and to purpose; so as that Sin be such an intolerable evil and insupportable burden, as that the poor Soul cannot bear, is not able to live without freedom and deliverance, but is constrain'd to flie for Refuge to Christ, that blessed Hope, set forth for poor Sinners. I say, an imperfect work in these things, is the baneful misery and ruine of Souls in our time. Alas! until there be a deep radication of Grace, all your attainments in spiritual things will be but like Paint and Pageants, Shells and Shadows; and you know a painted Sword or Fire, will never cut nor burn: neither will all the circumstantials, and semi persuasions in Soul-matters, ever lay the Ax to the root of your Lusts, to fetch out the core of Sin there, and slay the Enmity that is ingrav'd in your carnal minds against God and Godliness; there must be a deep, inward, powerful work, such as may carry the Soul through the pangs and struglings of the New-birth, out of it self both as to Sin, and its own Righteousness, quite over to Christ; or else, in a short time, your Lusts will regain their strength, and become more mischievous than ever, like the Man in the Gospel, *Mat.* 12 43, 44, 45. *When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, but findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out,*

and

and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits, more wicked than himself, and they enter in, and dwell there, and the last state of that man is worse than the former. So in *Hebr.* 6. 4. and 10. 26. and 2 *Pet.* 2. 20. O then above all, Young Ones, see to this, that there be a sound Conversion, as the ground-work of all, for upon this the very hinges of your Souls salvation turn. Hence our blessed Saviour in *John* 3. 3. pronounceth, *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.* Wherefore again and again, I advise Young Ones to see to their Foundation: it were, I conceive, much better for a Man to be deceived in thinking himself unregenerate when he is regenerate; than on the other hand, to deem himself regenerate, when he is not. The former mistake indeed is afflicting, but the last is damning. If a condemned Malefactor conceit he hath a Pardon, and has none, he may go pleasantly to the Gallows, but he won't be able to hold it when he comes there: The Lord open your eyes and hearts, and cause you to see and feel the truth and power of this first general Rule, or Means, in order to the fleeing your youthful Lusts.

Now I shall proceed to lay down those distinct Remedies, suitable to each particular Lust that young People stand bent unto.

And

And here again I must entreat you, as you have any regard to the glory of God, and your own Salvation, and would not be condemned with ungodly and impenitent Sinners at last, that you do not refuse to put in practice what shall be taught you in the following Rules, how to flee each particular Sin that you are so prone to; and now I shall begin with that which so early appeareth, even in your very Childhood, and wofully groweth up with you to riper years: Namely that airiness, vain rashness, and carelessness of spirit and conversation; all which, I at large and distinctly treated on under the first Enquiry, viz. *What were those Sins that might be more especially called youthful Sins?* Now foralmuch as these three border so near and close upon each other, I shall, for the Cure of these, prescribe this Remedy.

Remedy or Means against youthful Vanity, Rashness, and Inconsiderateness.

The First Remedy.

ENdeavor to get, and keep an awful impression upon thy heart all day long, of God's Omnipresence and Omniscience: that you cannot flie from him, because he is every where; and that you cannot hide or conceal any

any thing from him, becauſe all things are naked and open to his All-ſeeing Eye. At what time thou art ready to pour out thy heart in Vanity and Froth, catechize and chaſtiſe thy feathery and light ſpirit, after this manner: Doſt thou now remember thy Creator? Art thou aware of his holy Eye and Preſence? Canſt thou blear and blind the pure piercing flaming Eye of Heaven? What, wilt thou dare to pilfer, ſteal, be undutiful, and lie, while the jealous ſin-revenging God ſtands by? Thus would but Young Men preſentiate the Majeſty, Preſcience, and Omniſcience of God to themſelves, in the midſt of their juvenile Extravagancies, how would it awe and fill their Souls with trembling? one Aſpect of this Eye of God, is able to make the whole Earth tremble, *Pſal.* 104. 32. *He looketh on the Earth, and it trembleth.* And *Job* ſpeaketh of ſome Sinners the Murtherer, the Thief, the Adulterer that to be ſeen in their Sins, is to them the greateſt terror imaginable. *Job* 24. 17. *a man* (ſaith he) *ſee them, they are in the terrors of the Shadow of Death.* Now then young People, I appeal to you, what fear and holy ſeriouſneſs would this work in you, did you always thus ſet the Lord before you, as *David* ſpeaketh in the 16. *Pſal.* 8. and at your right hand, then would you? could you? durſt you be ſo vain, fickle, unſtable, toſſed up and down with

every

every puff of windy pleaſures? Oh no, and here let me add this, *viz.* repreſent to thy Soul, what an Eye it is that ſeeth thee? It may be you may fancy, that God ſees as man ſees. Scripture ſpeaks of Sinners thinking that God is ſuch a one as themſelves, in 50. *Pſal.* 22. Alas man may ſee, and not ſee, as we ſay, *i. e.* wink, and connive at thy youthful Sins, and not be at all diſpleaſed with thee: But God's Eye is, (1.) an holy, pure, ſtrict, obſerving Eye; there is nothing can eſcape his knowledge, whereſoever you are, whatſoever you are doing, you are ſtill under his obſervation. *Pſal.* 11. 4. *His Eyes behold, his Eye-lids try the Children of men.* Hab. 1. 13. *Thou art* (ſaith the Prophet) *of purer Eyes than to behold Evil, and canſt not look upon Iniquity.* That is, canſt not with the leaſt approbation, nay, canſt not without great indignation look upon evil. O vain Youth, remember that an angry, holy Eye is upon thee, in all thy irreligious and vitious Courſes, in all thy furious and precipitate Evil Ways. And then (2.) conſider it is an infinite Eye, comprehending all things paſt, preſent, and to come at once, (*uno intuitu.*) Many things confound us, we can be intent upon nothing, but in a ſucceſſive way things done many years ago elapſe; and ſlip our remembrance; but it's not ſo with God, with whom a thouſand years

are

are but as one day. See that 139. *Pſal.* v. 3. *Thou compaſſeſt my Path*, ſaith David, *and my lying down, and art acquainted with my Ways*. v. 7. *Whither ſhall I go from thy Spirit? or whither ſhall I flee from thy Preſence? If I aſcend up to Heaven, thou art there: If I make my Bed in Hell, behold thou art there. If I take the Wings of the Morning, and dwell in the uttermoſt parts of the Sea, even there ſhall thy Hand lead me*, &c. Sure, young men, this would call in your vain, and ſtragling thoughts, and unite your careleſs Spirits to the fear of God's holy name, if you believe and remember God's infinite Preſence. There is a Story, of a pious man, I have met with, who being deſirous to reclaim an unchaſte Woman, from her lewd and vile Converſation, took this courſe with her, he came to her, pretending to have ſome wanton dalliances with her, provided it might be done with all privacy; ſhe thereupon led him from Room to Room, but he ſtill made many ſcruples, leſt at the Window, or that Key-hole, this crevis, or that cranny, ſome or other might chance to peep in, and eſpy them together; at length ſhe brought him to the inwardeſt Room in the Houſe, where, ſaith ſhe, I am confident that none can poſſibly pry in to diſcover what we do. Whereupon he told her with weeping Eyes, No bolts nor bars can keep out God; no walls, nor doors can hinder

his piercing Eye; and what will it profit us to ſhun the Eye of man, when the Eye of God is ſtill upon us? Methinks this conſideration ſhould change thy youthful froth and fury into a ſerious gravity and ſobriety; that God's Eye upon thee is never ſhut: the moſt waking Eye among men is at times cloſed, *but the Lord never ſlumbereth, nor ſleepeth, Pſal.* 121. 4. It was excellent advice, that a *Rabbi* gave to one of his young Pupils, *Three things*, ſaith he, *I would have thee remember all day long; an Eye that ſees thee, an Ear that hears thee, an Hand that regiſters all thy Actions.* So would I commend this to you, young people, to cure that natural Levity, and Precipitancy, that your age is ſo incident unto. O remember, and often repeat it to your ſelf, that God is in all places, and not only without you, but in your very Breaſts and Boſom, viewing all your vain Thoughts and Imaginations, and all your vile Luſts and Inclinations: So that if you have a mind to be merry and jolly for the ſpace of an hour, or two, with that Mirth which the Wiſe Man calleth *Madneſs*; I beſeech you before you adventure upon it, firſt try if you can find out ſuch an hour wherein God's Eye is not on you, and then you have my conſent, to take that hour for that mirth: But ſure I am, no ſuch hour can be found out. And then (3.) conſider that this Eye of God,

that

that is thus holy, pure, obſerving, and in-
finite, is alſo an Eye of jealouſie and juſtice.
If a Husband have a jealous Eye over a
Wife, or a Maſter over his Servant, what
a curb and bridle is it, to reſtrain the one
from filthineſs? and the other from falſe-
neſs? and if ſo, how much more ſhould
the conſideration of his Eye, who hath ſtiled
himſelf in the 20. *Exod.* 5. *the Jealous God*
abate, and tame the wild fierceneſs and
wantonneſs of Youth, eſpecially if you
poſſeſs your Soul with the deep appre-
henſions, that his Eye is an Eye of Juſtice
too, that is, to bring you to Judgment, for
all your youthful Vanities and Follies. In
this ſenſe, the Prophet *Jeremiah* explaineth
it, *Jer.* 32. 19. *Thine Eyes are upon all the*
Ways of the Sons of men, to give every one
according to his Ways, and according to the
Fruit of his doings. For God now obſerves
you, in order to bring forth all into the light
Judgment; the ſerious thoughts of which
made ſuch deep impreſſions on the Heart of
Auguſtine, that in his 8*th* Sermon concern-
ing the coming of Chriſt to Judgment, he
ſaith, *Ecce in quo periculo inceſſanter conſiſto*
&c. Behold in what danger I ſtand conti-
nually, though I do not continually think
of it; and the more wretched I, that I can
forget it: for God always ſeeth me, and all
my Sins: a ſtrict ſentence always awaits
me; in this condition I am, when I wake
and

and when I ſleep; when I laugh, and when I am ſad; when I am proud, and paſſionate, *ſic ſemper & ubiq;* thus I am always, and every where. O would but young people, when they are in their briſk and careleſs moods, with this holy man, repreſent it to themſelves, that they are thus in the preſence, and under the Eye of God, who hath appointed a day, wherein he will judge both quick and dead, ſurely it would create a trembling in them. Wherefore in the cloſe of this Rule, let me preſent you with a collection of choice Scriptures, that may be as a continual guide for youth to direct their Paths in the good Old way, how they may be all the day long in the fear of the Lord, and alſo that may be as an Angel with a drawn Sword in their evil ways to reſtrain their ſteps therein. *Job* 13. 27. *Thou lookeſt narrowly to all my Paths, thou ſetteſt a print upon the Heels of my Feet.* *Job* 24. 21, 22. *For his Eyes are upon the ways of man, and he ſeeth all his goings: there is no darkneſs nor ſhadow of death, where the workers of Iniquity may hide themſelves.* Job 31. 41. *Doth he not ſee my Ways? and count all my Steps?* Pſal. 11. 14. *The Lord's Throne is in the Heavens, his Eyes behold, his Eye lids try the Children of men,* and the 139. *Pſalm* throughout. *Prov.* 5. 21. *The ways of man are before the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings.* Prov. 15. 3. *The Eyes of the*

Lord are in every place, beholding the Evil and the Good: And in the 11. v. *Hell and Deſtruction are before the Lord, how much more then the hearts of the Sons of men?* Jer. 23. 24. *Can any man hide himſelf in ſecret places, that I ſhall not ſee him, ſaith the Lord? Do not I fill Heaven and Earth, ſaith the Lord? Darkneſs hideth not from him, but the Night ſhineth as the Day.* And in the 27. verſ. *I have ſeen thine Adulteries and thy Neighings, wo unto thee, wilt thou not be made clean? when ſhall it once be?* Heb. 4. 13. *But all things are naked and open unto the Eyes of him with whom we have to do.* Thus you ſee what abundance of Scriptures there are of this kind, and there are multitudes more, tending to the ſame purpoſe; ſurely it intimates to us, that we are not eaſily perſwaded of this truth, that God is always preſent with us, and beholding of us: ſurely the Lord would never urge this matter ſo often upon the Children of men, but that he knoweth how prone we are to queſtion it; O there is a world of Atheiſm and unbelief in our Heart about it. Hence you read *Pſal* 50. 22. *Thou thoughteſt I was ſuch one as thy ſelf.* Job 22. 13. *How doth God know? can he judge through the dark Cloud?* ſo *Pſal.* 64. 7. *They ſay the Lord ſhall not ſee.* And *Ezek.* 9. 9. *The Lord hath forſaken the Earth, he ſeeth not: And they ſay to the Almighty, Depart from us,* &c. O the ho-

nib

rible, helliſh Atheiſm, that reigns in the hearts of thouſands: Elſe whence is it that a Servant ſhall be afraid of his Maſter's eye, a Sinner of his Miniſter's, a Child of his Father's, and a man of his Child's eye and preſence, more than of the great *Jehovah's?* O how many declare their Sin as *Sodom*, neither are they aſhamed; I appeal to you, can you believe that theſe conſider that the moſt high God hath a piercing Eye to eſpy, and a powerful Hand to puniſh the workers of Iniquity? Would *Achan* have ſtole the Wedge of Gold? or *Gehazi* took the Reward? or *Ananias* and *Saphira* contrived, and told the Lye to the Apoſtle? had they ſeen the Eye of God that ſaw them. O young men, durſt you leave, and neglect your ſinful and miſerable Souls to periſh for ever at that rate you do, did you but live always as in the preſence of God, and as under his all ſeeing jealous Eye? Wherefore I beſeech you practiſe this Rule, if ever you would be delivered from a vain Spirit and Converſation. I have been the longer upon this, becauſe it will be of uſe through all the reſt, which I hope I may diſpatch with a quicker hand.

Means, or Remedies againſt that Epidemical Sin of youthful delaying Repentance, and Converſion, &c.

YOung People are (as you have heard) exceedingly prone to put off God, and their Soul's, with ſaying in themſelves, *I am young enough, and have time enough to repent hereafter*, &c. theſe are the uſual pleas that young people make for delaying their Converſion; and this is indeed the uſual, and beaten Road to Hell, and the common Snare, in which Satan entangles multitudes of unwary Youth, perſwading them that it's too ſoon to repent, that it's too early to ſully, and ſadden the briſkneſs, and beauty of their Youth, with the melancholy apprehenſions of Religion: but alas while ſilly Youth liſtens to theſe charms the fatal hour of death often ſteals on, and cuts them down, e're they are aware, or awake. Wherefore for the Cure and Remedy hereof, I ſhall offer theſe following Conſiderations.

Firſt, *Conſider the danger of Delay.*

Young People make little or nothing of putting off the important matters of their Soul

Souls, a day, a week, a month, a year, not considering what an infinite prejudice it may be to their everlasting Happiness to neglect the looking after these matters, though it were no more, than for one hour, or one day: and that will appear,

1. In regard of the utter uncertainty of their time, and that both of their time of Life, and time of Grace. Alas you know not what a day, an hour may bring forth; the very next hour may find thee alive, and leave thee dead. This is that which Youth are not easily perswaded of; they fooliſhly dream of years, and then they entertain so good an opinion of the truth of their Dream, that they grow as peremptory in it, as if they had an Inheritance settled upon them for perpetuity. But O vain Youth, where ever dwelt the man, what was his Name, that could ever assure thee of another day, nay, that thou shalt see the end of this day? Is not thy Flesh grass, as well as others? view the weekly Bills of Mortality; and see there whether young ones are priviledg'd above others from Sickness, and Death. Let it therefore be seriously thought upon by young people, that their time of Life is utterly uncertain, that they are but one breaths distance from Death and Eternity; and though it is possible that they may live till to morrow, or next Year, yet it's equally possible that they may dye before; others

have been ſurprized, who have had the ſame reaſon to hope for a longer time, as themſelves; and therefore they cannot delay, and put off their Converſion, and turning to God, without notorious or manifeſt danger.

O be not deceived, you whoſe conſultations have wont to be with Fleſh and Blood, and whoſe concluſions uſe to be, that you are young, and healthy, and have many Years to come; and therefore it's time enough hereafter to repent. Piety is too grave for your green head, the *caput mortuum* of your old Age, will ſerve well enough to ſerve God with. I ſay, be not deceived, a ſudden death may ſnatch you hence, and ſend your guilty Soul to Hell, before your Body be carried to the duſt; for the great God is the ſole and ſoveraign Lord of your life and time, and pray ſee how he rebukes the preſumption of ſuch Sparks, who boaſt of their years to come, 12. *Luke* 19, 20. *I will ſay to my Soul, Soul thou haſt much Goods laid up for many Years, take thine eaſe, eat, drink and be merry.* This Prodigal was neither ſick, nor poſſeſſed with any fears of Sickneſs and Death, yet ſee what follows, v. 20. *But God ſaid unto him, Thou fool this Night thy Soul ſhall be required of thee: then whoſe ſhall theſe things be?* So in the 28. *Iſa.* 18. you read of ſome Deſperadoes that had *made a Covenant with Death*, and were at *an agreement with Hell*; But what ſaith the Lord?

why

why he telleth them that the *one should be disannulled*, & the *other should not stand*; nay, he calleth them *a refuge of Lyes*: and that *the overflowing Scourge and Storm of his wrath should rend down all their lying refuges*: And in the 58. *Psal.* 9. you read that such as are *taken away living, and in his wrath, before the Pots can feel the Thorns*, i.e. suddenly, and in so short a breath, that elsewhere they are said to *go down into the Pit in a moment*: and that these rebukes may particularly intend young ones, you may see in the 36. of *Job* 14. *They dye in Youth*, &c. Hence the Holy Ghost often makes use of that Metaphor *Grass* in the 40. *Isa.* 6. and 90. *Psal.* 6. *In the Morning it flourisheth, and groweth up, in the Evening it is cut down and withereth.* The grass is growing in the field, and, as our Saviour noteth, *to morrow cast into the Oven*, *Matth.* 6. 30. Such is the condition of Youth, you may be in good health, in a flourishing condition, in mirth and jollity one day, and be burning in Hell the next. Therefore flee this Sin of delaying your Repentance, *&c.* it was the counsel of *Solomon*, who was inspired, 27. *Prov.* 1. *Boast not thy self of to morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth. q. d.* This day God in mercy affords thee to repent in, *&c.* but trust not upon a to morrow, that is utterly uncertain whether it come or no? or if it do, whether thy Conversion or thy Condemnation in it shall be brought forth or no? If it was

thy own, and thou couldſt certainly know it would be in thy poſſeſſion, &c. then might be ſome little pretence for thy preſent delaying: but when it is another's, and it is utterly hid and concealed from thee, whether thou ſhalt live to it or no, how can you without certain danger delay till another day. He that will adventure to build on Ground that is none of his own, muſt look to have all undone, or overturn'd at the pleaſure or diſpleaſure of another. Thus you delay, and profuſely waſte the preſent ſeaſon and ſpace of Repentance, which merciful God indulgeth you with, and boldly entrench upon the future, which God has reſerv'd in his own power: how hazardous an adventure do you run, for it's a rule in the civil Law, no Perſon can promiſe that which is anothers. Now the owner and proprietor of your time is God, and he hath concealed the day, the hour, the moment of Death's arreſt from us, that ſo you ſhould never delay, but work out your Salvation to day, while it's called to day: the command of God takes hold of you at the preſent; the counſel of God concerning the future, is kept hid from you: alas for a to morrow, whoſe is it, *Seneca* the Heathen could ſee this, and ſay *ſolum tempus præſens noſtrum:* No time is ours but the preſent: to count upon a to morrow, is as the Proverb runs, *To count your Chickens before they*

be hatched. It is reported of *Cæſar*, that he would never let his Soldiers know when or where he meant to march next. So here it is altogether uncertain, at whoſe door God may knock next by a ſudden Death; he doth not always ſend out the Scouts and fore-runners of a lingring ſickneſs, as warnings of our approaching change. But ſometimes in a moment, in the midſt of youthful ſecurity and jollity, he lops down the ſtrong and healthful, while he ſpareth the more infirm and ſickly. There is no condition of Life, but we have inſtances how it hath been imbitter'd by ſudden deaths occaſioned, and ſometimes by falls, either of a Houſe, or Horſe, or elſe by falls off a Houſe or Horſe; and ſometimes by Fire kindling upon Perſons when aſleep, and ſometimes by Water, perſons falling into it when awake. Again, ſometimes by preternatural Heats and Colds, ſome burnt up with Feavers, others drown'd with Humours, ſome choaked with Quinſies, others ſnatch'd away with Apoplexies, in ſo ſhort a breath, that they have not time to cry out for help. Innumerable are theſe Caſualties that you young ones lie open to, and how dangerous then is it to delay, though you are now free from pain, and in good health: may not the ſame be ſaid of many others, who died ſuddenly, and it may be delayed their Repentance on the like grounds as you do.

do. O foolish and unwise, who hath bewitched you! Moreover it is to be considered that your present delaying to flee your Lusts doth exceedingly provoke the Lord of your Life and Time, to cut short your Life; for how can you reasonably expect that the Almighty, in whom ye live and move, and have your being, should prolong the days of such Rebels, who make no other use of their time but to affront and dishonour him? O young people, how righteous a thing would it be for God to cut you off, and deny you a longer continuance on Earth, while you put him off and delay your Repentance and Return to him. Surely if thou resolvest upon a present league with thy Youthful Lusts, refusing a divorce as yet between them and thy Soul, it is most just with God to resolve upon a present divorce between thy Soul and Body, and to refuse thee an hours patience more. Wherefore O mortal Youth, this minute Dust and Ashes, represent to thyself thy danger, if thou delay; the time of thy delay, is a time full of danger upon this account, *viz.* the uncertainty of thy time of Life. But then,

2. It is dangerous in regard of the uncertainty of thy time of Grace. So that suppose thou hadst an assurance of the continuance of thy time of Life for many Years, as *Hezekiah* had, yet what

would that avail thee, while thou art at utter uncertainty about thy time of Grace. If you enquire what I mean by time of Grace. I *Answer*, it ſtands in the enjoyments of the uſual means of Salvation, which are two fold; *firſt*, the outward preaching of the Word; *ſecondly*, the inward ſtrivings and motions of the Spirit: theſe make up a time of Grace, which is called an acceptable time, a time wherein God may be found, a day of Salvation, in *Pſal.* 32. 6. and 2 *Cor.* 6. 2. Now ſuch a time much differeth from that which the *Greeks* call χρονος *i.e.* the time of our Life which laſteth as long as our Lives laſt. Alas there is many a man out-lives his time of Grace: hence *Luke* 19. *O that thou hadſt known in this thy day the things that belong to thy Peace; but now they are hid from thine Eyes.* The time of Grace is *tempus labile* a tranſient thing: delay but one quarter of an hour longer, and thou mayſt with *Eſau* be rejected, and find no more any place for an acceptable Repentance; *poſt eſt occaſio calva.* Ah how did *Eſau* weep and take on after he had loſt his time of Grace: he might *once* have had the time of Bleſſing without thoſe bitter Agonies, but he delayed and loiter'd away his ſeaſon. Great is the mercy of God to allow man a time of Grace on Earth; *but great is the miſery of man*, as *Solomon* ſaith, *Eccleſ.* 8. 6. becauſe he diſcerns not his time, who

who can give a due estimate of enjoying the Gospel, wherein so great Salvation is offered to Sinners, *Behold I stand at the Door and knock*, &c. *Rev.* 3. 20. *Though thou hast played the Harlot with many Lovers, yet return unto me, saith the Lord.* Jer. 3. 1. *O Israel thou hast destroyed thy self, but in me thy help found. As I live saith the Lord, I desire not the death of a Sinner*, &c. *Ezek.* 33. 11. *As though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, that you be reconciled to God*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 19. In the Gospel we have the love of God commended to us, in that when we were Enemies, Christ died for us; we have his admirable Condescension, his manifold Invitations, his precious Overtures, his strange and wonderful Reasonings, *Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye dye?* His reiterated Calls, *Isa.* 55. 1. *Come, come, come*, three times in one verse. O the incomparable love and kindness that is displayed in the Gospel to poor Sinners. O that there was in young People a Heart to understand these things that concern their Peace in this their day, before they are for ever hid from their Eyes. Sure you would not shuffle and shift off these blessed offers of Grace with dilatory excuses, did you but consider how soon the Market will be over and gone, how soon your plenty may be turn'd into penury, a Famine may arise of hearing the Word of the Lord, and thy Soul perish for want of

Vision

Vision, thy Teachers may be removed by Death, natural or civil; or God may send the Gospel one way, and thee another. O young man, now thou hast the Lord's Voice in the publick Ministry of his Servants, crying to thee, Flee, flee thy youthful Lusts to day, while called to day: O hear his Voice this day, this hour of the day, without any longer delay, for you are wholly uncertain whether (if you should live till a to morrow) ever you shall have another Call; you are not the disposer of his Offers and Calls: sometimes God hath been quick with Sinners, he hath invited them to come in, and they not regarding, he hath immediately rejected them, *Luke* 14. 24. *For I say unto you, that none of the men that were bidden, shall taste of my Supper.* Therefore take heed, it is dangerous deferring; that which the Lord spake of Judgment, and Affliction, in the 1. of *Nahum* 9. *I will make an utter end: Affliction shall not rise up the second time*, may be fulfilled concerning his gracious offers and invitations in the Gospel; possibly the Lord will make an utter end of speaking, you may never hear more from him, be sure he will at last come to an end of calling, and you are not sure but the present Call may be his last. And O how deplorable is a Sinner's case when the Lord shall say, *Because I have called, and you have refused, I will call no more for ever,*

he

he that is unjuſt, let him be unjuſt ſtill; a
he that is filthy, let him be filthy ſtill, Rev.
21. Which brings me to ſpeak of the
cond Branch, wherein thy time of Gra
conſiſts, and whereof it is conſtituted, nam
ly the inward ſtrivings and motions of t
Spirit of God, how uncertain theſe a
So that ſuppoſe thou hadſt an aſſurance
the continuance of the outward Calls of t
Word, yet what aſſurance haſt thou of
inward ſtrivings and operations of the Sp
rit, without which all the outward mea
will be ineffectual. Alas! how long m
we poor Miniſters ſtand at your Doors, a
knock and call, Awake thou that ſlee
eſt, and ariſe from the Dead; er'e one Sin
ner will ſtir, until that omnipotent Age
put forth his virtue and influence. As th
Waters of *Bathesda* had no ſanative healin
Vertue in them, till the Angel at a certai
time of the day moved and troubled th
Waters: So let Miniſter's abilities an
gifts be what they will, they do but plough
upon the Rocks, as it were, until the Spir
concur to take away the ſtony Heart, an
open thoſe Iron Gates of the Soul, as h
did *Lydia*'s. Now this bleſſed Spirit do
ordinarily in time of hearing the Wor
afford to men, eſpecially to young one
many good Motions and Excitations to re
pentance, in Enlightnings, Awakenings,
ſeeing their Sins before them, in the
bloody

bloody guilt and condemning nature; bringing them into ſtraits of Conſcience, ſtirring up affections and good purpoſes of leaving their Sins, putting them upon Prayer, and coming to Chriſt, *&c.* All which pretious Motions and workings of the Spirit with the Word, in the Souls of young perſons, are choice Mercies; and if they were wiſe without delay incontinently, and preſently to comply with the ſame, it might be as much as their eternal Happineſs is worth: whereas on the contrary, if they quench theſe bleſſed motions, by delays and prorogations, as *Felix* did, it may amount to the damage of Damnation, and who can tell what that amounts to. God may be provoked to withdraw his Spirit, and ſay, *My Spirit ſhall ſtrive no more with them.* For there is nothing more uncertain than the ſtrivings and motions of the Spirit of God, it is compared to *the Wind that bloweth where it liſteth, John* 3. 8. It is not like our Tydes that come at certain and ſet times, ſo that if you miſs the Morning Tyde, you may take the Evening; no, no, but it's like the Wind which ſometimes riſes, as we ſay, and then all of a ſudden falls and lies ſtill; ſometimes it bloweth out of one corner, and then the quite contrary way, ſo are the workings of the Spirit, he may deal with thy Soul to day, and afterwards withdraw from thee; move in your Hearts now,

and

and for hereafter be for ever ſilent: and therefore thou ſhouldſt do as the Mariner, who knowing that he hath not the Wind at his own command, and that he cannot make his Voyage without its gales, what doth he do? why he lieth by and watcheth for the ſeaſon, when the Wind maketh for him, and when ſuch a ſeaſon cometh, he is careful to lay hold of it, and to hoiſe up Sail and be gone. So ſhouldſt thou do, young man, never imagine that thou haſt the Spirit of God at thy command, or that ever thou canſt ſail to Heaven without his gracious Gales, but diligently lie by the Waters of the Sanctuary, waiting and watching for his ſacred Movings thereon, and when thou haſt them, then immediately and obedientially open the furled Sails of thy Soul, and ſay, *Adored be thy heavenly Majeſty, for this gracious Viſitation of thine to me a wretched Sinner: Welcome, welcome to my blind and hard Heart, are theſe Convictions and Pulſations of thine. O let me not miſcarry and periſh between Convictions and Converſions; but perfect thy work, dear Lord, now thou haſt me on the Wheel: O deſiſt not thy operation, till thou haſt formed me a Veſſel of Mercy and brought me out a new Creature in forming Chriſt in me.* Thus be thou kind to thy own Soul, in being careful to cloſe with the preſent advantages which are vouchſafed to thee in this thy time

time of Grace, and encourage thy ſelf in this, the Spirit of God will be with you. 2 *Chron.* 15. 2. *The Lord is with you, while you are with him: if you ſeek him, he will be found of you, but if you forſake him, he will caſt you off.* O conſider the danger you run, when you put off all with this *hereafter, hereafter you will obey his Motions, and receive his Inſtructions*: This is the ready way to be for ever deſerted and caſt off by him. It is reported of *Hannibal*, that bewailing the loſs of his opportunity that he once had to take *Rome*, he ſhould ſay, *When I could, I had no mind to take* Rome: *When I would, I had no power.* There will be, I fear, innumerable, and incurable inſtances in the other world, that will confeſs to all Eternity, that when the Spirit in their time of Grace, wooed them to repent, and be converted, that their Sins might be blotted out, they had no mind to it; but when they would, after their deſertion and rejection upon a Bed of Death, they had no power. O young men, who now put it off, it is never enough conſidered by you, what infinite hazards you run, of periſhing for ever; a while longer, and a while longer, had almoſt ruined *Auguſtine*, when he was young, as himſelf owneth, in his 8*th* Book of *Conſcience* when he would not anſwer the Convictions of the neceſſity of Repentance, he craved Forbearance not to do

Non erat quod responderem veritate convictus, nisi tantum verba lenta & somnolenta. Modò ecce modò sine paululum, sed modò & modò non habet modum & sine paululum in longum ibat. Aug. in Confes.

it yet; I know not (saith he) what to answer being convinced of the truth, but only sluggish and sleepy words, anon, behold anon, suffer me a little: but anon, anon had no measure, and bear with me a little, held long afterwards. In chap. 11 of that Book, he finding the Devil flattering his Soul with perswasions to delay his Repentance, at last he violently breaks out *usque quo Domine, quamdiu? quam die cras, & cras? quare non modò? quare non hac hora est finis turpitudinis meæ?* O my God (saith he) how long wilt thou suffer me thus? How long shall I say to morrow and to morrow? Why should I not do it now, and this hour end that filthiness of Life, which otherwise will ruin me—— It is pleasing to Satan to steal away our precious seasons of Grace one after another, until we have not one more remaining. O young man, who is it, think you, that suggests that *Corvina Cras* as *Augustine* calls it, *cras, cras*, if you have been ignorant hitherto, know it from this day for a most certain truth, it is no other than that lyer Hell, the Devil, and sure I am he hath no way so plausible and politick to circumvent thee, as by hanging these weights of delay upon

upon thy Soul, and thereby letting and hindering thy preſent flight from Sin to Chriſt with an *hereafter is time enough*; ſo that thou mayſt conclude upon this, that more periſh this way than any other, for Satan can prevail upon few, to ſay peremptorily they will not repent; but this is the common ſnare and bait wherein, and whereby he taketh multitudes, *I will turn to God hereafter*; for theſe delays provoke the God of Grace to take away his Spirit, and then what can the miſerable Sinner do. It was the ſaying of an Eminent Perſon, *The Spirit of God is a tender thing, grieve it once, and you may drive it away for ever, and then it is not your crying, Lord, Lord, that will fetch him back again.* 'Thou mayſt intreat (to uſe the words of that bleſſed Soul-converting Preacher) for 'one dram of that Mercy that 'hath been offered, but thou 'haſt rejected; but it ſhall ne-'ver be granted to thee: God may clap 'that fearful ſentence upon thee, Now 'henceforth never Fruit grow on thee more, 'never Repentance come into thy Heart 'more. If now thou wilt not repent, and be 'converted, the Lord may ſet it down in 'his decree, that from this day forward 'thou mayſt fumble about thy Sins, but ſhall 'never get victory over them; thou mayſt 'blunder about Repentance, but never 'do

Mr. Fenner's danger of deferring Repentance.

'do the work; what is the reaſon? why? 'becauſe I would have purged thee, and 'thou wouldſt not, therefore thou ſhalt 'not be purged any more. O young men, there is a time wherein God will not be found; he will not always wait your leiſure, your pleaſure; how long or how ſhort your time of Grace will laſt, is hid from you: Repentance is God's gift, and Gifts are given according to the good pleaſure of the giver: It is a great miſtake to think that it is at your pleaſure to call it down from Heaven at your need, to convey you to Heaven, when you feel your ſelves falling into Earth; bitter Experience hath taught multitudes of ſhuffling delaying Sinners, the deluſions of ſuch conceits, while in their immoderate purſuit of their Luſts they have endeavoured to ſtop the mouth of Conſcience with promiſes that e're long they would take time to conſider and recollect themſelves, and return to God, in the mean while, ſtifling and ſlighting the merciful motions of the Spirit of Grace, of a ſudden, e're they are aware, a ſilent and ſecret decree paſſes againſt them, *Let them alone, they are joyned to their Luſts*, which though it make no noiſe in their Heads, yet it effectually ſealeth up their Heart to an incurable obduration and hardneſs. And now I appeal to you upon this conſideration, *viz.* the uncertainty of the time of Grace,

Grace, whether Delays are not unſpeakably dangerous, ſince no man knows whether the next day will afford him ſo much as a poſſibility of Repentance, if he put off and defer it this day. Wherefore, O young man, as ever thou wouldſt not be forſaken of God, and have the things of thy Peace for ever hid from thine Eyes, and the dreadful guilt of innumerable Sins ſeal'd upon thy Soul, O flee this youthful Sin of delaying Repentance a moment longer.

2. Conſider the Impiety and Wickedneſs of Delaying, for it doth in effect ſpeak thus to God, The real love and delight of my Soul is in my Luſts, I deſire thee therefore to ſtay for my Repentance till hereafter, and by no means to puniſh me while I ſhall be provoking and diſhonouring thee in the tract of my youthful days; give me leave to be a faithful Servant to divers Luſts and Pleaſures while I have ſtrength and ſpirits, and then when I grow impotent, and my Luſts turn me off, I pray thee to accept me, and grant me Heaven. O what monſtrous Blaſphemy and Impiety is there in ſuch a vile deportment towards the Bleſſed God, and pray is there not ſomething of this in every delay; it ſheweth evidently that thou preferreſt thy Luſts before him, yea, the Devil's ſervice before his. O tranſcendent horrid Wickedneſs, that ever a reaſonable

Creature ſhould chooſe to be employed in the Devil's work and drudgery, before that moſt gracious, noble, honourable ſervice of God. O young man, let Conſcience ſpeak, is the Devil ſo real a Friend, ſo good a Maſter, or is there ſo much pleaſure in being a ſlave to thy Luſts, as that the Lord of Heaven and Earth, the Author of thy Life and Breath, ſhould ſtand by and ſtay till they are in the firſt place ſerved, and then when the Devil and thy Luſts will diſmiſs thee, God ſhall have their leaving? I beſeech you let Conſcience judge in this caſe, whether Hell it ſelf can exceed ſuch Ungodlineſs. Suppoſe your dear Father that begat you, or your tender Mother that bare you, ſhould knock at your Door, and intreat an admiſſion, and you ſhould ſay That at preſent they muſt excuſe you, there are a company of Thieves, Murderers and Adulterers that you muſt firſt attend and entertain, *&c.* Would not this be condemned as a piece of vile Inhumanity? And can it be deemed (in the preſent caſe) a leſs piece of Impiety to put ſuch an high affront and indignity upon the Great God, as when he graciouſly invites you to break off your Sins by Repentance, that he might ſhew you Mercy, to put him off, as *Felix* did *Paul*, Go thy way for this time hereafter (poſſibly) I may attend, but for the preſent, there is the Devil and a train of your-

youthful Luſts ſtay for me, and I muſt give entertainment to them in the firſt place. This without an Hyperbole, may be ſtiled the Maſter-piece of Wickedneſs, the Mother of Abominations: it is a plain contradiction of, and direct oppoſition to the ſoveraign command of our Maker, who ſaith, *Eccleſ.* 12. 1. *Remember thy Creator in the Days of thy Youth, before the Evil days come*, &c. God ſaith, *To Day while it is called to Day, repent*: And you ſay, No, to day while it is called to day, I muſt rejoyce and follow my youthful pleaſures and delights. And ſo you put the lye upon God, and credit the Devil, who is the Father of Lyes. O this Sin of Delays hath a world of rebellion in it, and *Rebellion is as the Sin of Witchcraft.* Moreover the impiety of this Sin will further appear, if you conſider what a Scorn it caſts upon the admirable Grace of all the three glorious Perſons of the Trinity, as if not worthy of acceptance, the Father's Love and Wiſdom to and for a loſt World of Sinners, in decreeing and revealing of Jeſus Chriſt his bleſſed Son, to ſeek and to ſave what was loſt, opening a Fountain, and ſealing a new and everlaſting Covenant of Grace in his Blood, *that whoſoever believeth, and repenteth, ſhall not periſh, but have Everlaſting Life.* O aſtoniſhing Love; was there any need for God to ſtoop to offer undone man a Covenant

of Grace; but his ways are not as ours, &c. Now this youthful Sin of Delays ſpurneth at this Bowel and Boſom, Mercy and Love of God the Father: And can this be thought to be a little Sin? O unparallel'd Wickedneſs, of what a Scarlet tincture and bloody nature is this Sin. O young man, conſider it, take heed of ſhuffling; here thou wilt be apt to think within thy ſelf, that ſure this is not ſo. What I guilty of trampling on the bowels of Go'ds mercy, which I venture to put off, turning to him a little longer; far be it from me to do ſo great wickedneſs, I never intended any ſuch thing. O deluded Youth, come ſee thy guiltineſs e're it be too late to remedy thy ſelf. The God and Father of our Lord Jeſus revealeth and publiſheth his eternal thoughts of love to poor Sinners, that had deſtroyed themſelves, alloweth them a day of Salvation, and acceptable time to come in, and be ſaved without exception, though he was the offended party, yet he proclaims fury is not in me, I have no pleaſure in the death of Sinners, I am willing to be reconciled, lo I have found out a Ranſome, I have bruiſed my own Son, and ſlain my own Lamb, to be a ſacrifice for Sin, and a Saviour for Sinners, him have I ſealed and ſet forth to be the only propitiation for Sin through Faith in his Blood: ſure they will reverence my Son,

Son, and admire my Grace in offering him, and ſtrive who ſhall firſt receive him: ſure every Knee will bow to him, and every Mouth confeſs to him, what leſs could be expected. Now then inſtead of this, to crave with *Solomon*'s ſluggard, *a little longer*, and a *little longer to embrace and enjoy our vile Luſts*, which according to the tenor of the Goſpel, cannot one moment be regarded and loved without a manifeſt rejection of Chriſt: I appeal to you whether your preſent delays are not a notorious deſpiſing the Riches of God's Goodneſs, which Sin is a moſt bitter provocation of Almighty God, who could every moment confound ſuch deſpiſers of his Grace. What think you, will an earthly King bear it, that his deſcending below himſelf to ſpare and ſhew mercy to obſtinate Traytors, ſhould be deſpiſed. It is alſo to be conſidered how wickedly theſe delays do vilifie the Grace of our dear Redeemer, who though he was rich with the Riches of the Deity, he thought it no robbery to be equal with God, yet ſuch was his amazing Grace, that for our ſakes he became poor with the poverty of our humanity; he took upon him the form of a Servant, he was a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with Griefs, and here in the days of his Fleſh endured the contradiction of Sinners, the temptations of Satan, the curſe of the Law, the bitter wrath

wrath of God, and the accurſed death of the Croſs, and all this for Rebels, Enemies. O infinite condeſcenſion; and after all this is done, he comes a wooing to our Doors, and follows us up and down with the ſweet motions of his Spirit, and with the ſtrong motives of his Love, in dying for us: pleading, O Sinners, why will you dye? I am Jeſus who dyed for you, turn unto me, my Heart is towards you; what could I have done more for you to win you, to redeem you, than I have done. O remember how I was wounded for your Sins, Behold my Hands and Feet, reach hither thine Hand, put it into the hole in my ſide, look upon me in the Garden, and on the Croſs, and trace me there, when my Blood trickled down my weary Body, and ſee how I loved you, and whether ever love was like mine to you. O that the Lord would pleaſe to make you ſenſible, young people, and cauſe you to apprehend the truth of this, that Chriſt doth really thus plead with you, to know the things of your Peace, now in this your day, and to flee your youthful Luſts without delay. And here I pray give me leave, without the leaſt prevarication, to repreſent to you the impious nature of this Sin of delaying, as it is a deſpiſing and contemning all this rich Grace and Love of bleſſed Jeſus. O young man, while thou delayeſt, thou trampleſt on Chriſt's

Christ's precious Blood, thou embracest and openest to thy vile Lusts, and Christ is made to serve, to stand without in the mean while; is it not enough to provoke him in fury to be gone, and never return more till he come to sentence thee, to *go accursed into everlasting Fire?* Young man, has not Christ's Blood a cry? does it not cry to Heaven for Mercy to poor Sinners? and does it not cry on Earth to Sinners, O cease your enmity, throw down your weapons of hostility: O repent, repent, and I will appease and quench the Flames of divine Wrath, that your Sins have kindled, *&c.* Now delays, so long as they last, are a direct opposition hereunto, it is equivalent with waging war against crucified Christ; it is interpretatively a conspiracy with the Devil against Christ. Young man, were you aware of this, O be assured the hand of *Joab* is in this, there is a peculiar enmity in Satan against the Blood of Christ, as it is a Sinner's ransom, while himself is left bound with eternal Chains; hence he subtilly endeavoureth to strengthen the confederacy with thy youthful Lusts by present delays, which if he can effect, he knoweth it to be a direct compliance with him, to vilifie that healing Plaister of Christ's precious Blood; and how doth he insult when he can prevail herein, to keep out Christ, notwithstanding all his wooings, plead-

pleadings, and to keep up the present leag
between thee and thy Lusts, as he m
certainly does whilst thou delays. O you
man, never forget this argument agai
this Sin of delaying: it is a Sin direct
against the bleeding dying love of Chri
And then it is a sin against the blessed S
rit, the third Person of the sacred Trinit
who proceeds from the Father and the So
and comes in the ministry of the Word i
wardly to strive with you, to convince y
of Sin and Misery, in order to a revealing
Christ and his Righteousness to you for yo
Salvation. O admirable Grace! that the H
Ghost, that heavenly Messenger should vou
safe to come under a Sinner's roof upon su
a design so advantagious to a self-destroyi
Creature. O with what humble thank
Hearts should we receive such a messeng
that leaves thee probably many ninety ni
better then thou art, and comes to th
secretly whispering and breathing. O
thy youthful Lusts to day, while it is c
ed to day, return, return, O prodigal you
there is Bread enough, and to spare in t
Father's house: if you stay here in this
Country you perish, *if you live after*
Flesh, you must dye.

O young ones, your Delays must ne
provoke and highly affront the blessed S
rit, they cast a Scorn upon him, to see
his melting Perswasions and Motions set
naught

naught, and at the ſame time the charms and hiſſings of Satan, that helliſh Charmer and Serpent entertained. O how cutting, and bitterly provoking would it be, to a compaſſionate Father, to ſee a rebellious Son ſtopping his Ear to all his loving and good Advice and Counſel, and opening it to the vile inticements and ſeducements of baſe fellows. How was *Jacob* troubled, when his Sons *Simeon* and *Levi* rebelled, *Gen.* 34. 30. *Ye have troubled me* (ſaith their Father) *and made me ſtink among the Inhabitants of the Land, the Canaanites*, &c. O young man, when the two Spirits, that of Heaven, and that of Hell, come to thy Soul, and knock for entrance, and thou openeſt to Satan, and ſhutteſt out the Spirit of God by delays; this cannot be done without an high hand of rebellion, there is abundance of impiety in it: for herein thou caſteſt a contempt on the Spirit: if it be a deprecating thing, to ſet one perſon lower, and in a meaner place in my Houſe than another of meaner quality, how much more to ſhut the door againſt a perſon that is a Friend, while an Enemy is let in; ſurely compariſons are too ſhort in the preſent caſe; the good and gracious Spirit of God cometh wooing, and arguing. Be intreated, O young man, to open, Chriſt's yoke is eaſie, one day of a repenting Sinner's Spirit in ſtrict watching, and holy walking, is better

better than a thouſand days elſewhere, &c. And Sinners delay and neglect attendance hereunto, making the urgings of Sin and Satan an excuſe for their preſent put-off, theſe do not only rob the Spirit of that honour and glory due to him, but highly expoſe him to contempt. And it is very remarkable, that ordinarily ſuch perſons are left of God, to run into ſuch heights of wickedneſs, that deſervedly bringeth them to ſome ſhameful and deſpicable end: It muſt be confeſſed, ſometimes God hath overcome ſuch by his Grace, after much ado (if I may ſo expreſs it) ſtriving on his part and rebelling on theirs; but then it muſt be granted alſo, that ſuch have uſually been exceedingly wounded, and wofully diſtreſſed in their Souls, for their ſo long ſtanding, and ſtouting it out; but where it ends not in Converſion, there not only the blackneſs of darkneſs is reſerved for them in the other world, after that direful Sentence, of *Go ye Curſed*; but even in this Life, they become notorious to all for their Ungodlineſs and Impiety. O let this conſideration, young ones, prevail with you no longer to delay your Repentance and turning to God, *viz.* the Impiety of it; which I might farther ſhew you, from the direct oppoſition that delays carry against your Baptiſmal Covenant, and all thoſe holy Inſtitutions of Chriſt in the Goſpel, to

ſually ſtiled, *the means of Grace*, whereby you are obliged everlaſtingly to the earlieſt Converſion and Repentance, all which I might have eaſily formed up into Arguments, to ſet forth the impiety of Delays: but I ſhall not inſiſt on theſe, only ſhall ſum up the ſtrength of what hath been offered, that Delays are impious and wicked, as they treſpaſs againſt the bowel-mercy of God the Father, the bleeding wounds of God the Son, the bleſſed Inſpirations of God the holy Ghoſt, which Sin is enough to break our Hearts and Eyes with grief and tears: It is a Sin of ſuch a Scarlet tincture, as that it muſt needs make us aſhamed, if there be any ſhame in us; for the mercies of God are all as ſo many meſſages of Love and Kindneſs; and every drop of the Blood of Chriſt is as a Sermon of Love and Grace, and every illapſe of that ſweet and heavenly Dove, is as a ſacred Band, and Cord of Love and Mercy, and all to win us, to draw us, to ſave us, *Rom.* 12. 1. 2 *Cor* 7. 1. O wonderful love of God, who ever heard of ſuch kindneſs, that the offended Majeſty of Heaven and Earth, who hath all Power and Might in himſelf, and is infinitely removed from all poſſibility of want; that he ſhould condeſcend to us Rebels, to ſend his own dear Son in the likeneſs of ſinful Fleſh, deliver him up to the accurſed Death of the Croſs, open an everlaſting Fountain of

Grace,

Grace, enter his Proteſtations, yea his Oath, that he has no pleaſure in a Sinner's death, and for as much as our Sin had procured a malediction, and heavy wrath upon us, and a woful ſeperation of our Souls from the bleſſed God; That it ſhould ever enter into the Heart of God (to the end that ſuch as we might go free, and be delivered from that Curſe and Wrath, and be reſtored to the favour of God) to bruiſe his own Son, and put his Soul and Body to grief, and make him an Offering for Sin; and O how wonderful was the Love of Chriſt, that he ſhould be content, and willing to come under the obligation to this Oblation, to the bearing of this Curſe and Wrath in our ſtead; was there ever Love like to this, that when we were Enemies, ſpitting out our venom and enmity againſt God, he ſhould dye for us, pay our Debts, have his Hands and Feet nailed for us, *&c.* And O how wonderous is the Grace and Condeſcention of the third Glorious Perſon, the bleſſed Spirit that ever he ſhould ſtrive with Sinners, in order to their Converſion, when he might have ſtood at an everlaſting diſtance from them. O the rare humility of the whole Trinity, expreſſed in theſe Myſteries of Love and Grace. Now for any of *Adam*'s undone poſterity, condemned Creatures, poor Worms, Hell-deſerving Sinners, to abuſe all this Grace and rich Mercy,

Mercy, how impious, and monſtrouſly vile a thing this is, I have largely proved to you, and ſhewed you in particular that this Sin of Delays, is an high affront, and indignity offer'd to all this Mercy and Grace, the conſideration whereof ſhould make you lift up your Voice, and weep bitterly. A ſtubborn *Saul* wept, upon the reflection of his abuſe, and ill requital of poor *David's* kindneſs, in 1 *Sam.* 24.16,17, 18. The Lord open your Eyes and Hearts this day, young ones, that you may with grief and ſhame flee from this Sin, that carrieth ſuch tranſcendent wickedneſs in it. It's a known rule, *corruptio optimi, eſt peſſima.* The beſt things abuſed, prove the worſt of all. O remember it, young ones, Delays under theſe Circumſtances, put very great aggravations upon all your Sins. O think of it, what melting Arguments theſe three Names have in them, *Creator*, *Redeemer*, *Sanctifier*, to a preſent Converſion, and then think what a Soul confounding thing it is, to contradict, oppoſe the Power and Authority, and to abuſe and contemn the Grace and Mercy of each Perſon. See that in *Iſa.* 1. 2. *Hear O Heavens, and give Ear O Earth, I have nouriſhed and brought up Children, but they have rebelled*, &c. O what Paleneſs would gather upon your Faces, were you cited to appear before the

Bar of God, and your Conſciences ſhould give teſtimony againſt you herein?

The next Conſideration I ſhall offer for your help, againſt this youthful Sin of Delays ſhall be as followeth.

3. Conſider the egregious folly and madneſs of Delaying thy Repentance, and return to God, wherein (as in the former Conſideration thou abuſeſt the Grace of God ſo here) thou abuſeſt the very Reaſon of Man, and moſt fooliſhly cheateſt thy ſelf, as is evident in theſe following particulars.

Thou wilt turn to God hereafter, which is (as hath been largely proved) utterly uncertain, and at preſent thou wilt embrace thy ſinful Pleaſures; now is not this notorious folly, to put all to the deſperate adventure of an *hereafter*, when thouſands have periſhed, and found no place for Repentance, in all their after Times and Seaſons.

Suppoſe at laſt you ſhould come to get Chriſt, and pardon, and God would pleaſe to wait upon you (though this is rare, this is a miracle of Grace) yet what a wounding will it be to you, to remember how you have ſpent your youth and ſtrength in Sin. O the bitter Out-cries, and Accuſations of ſuch! Now how fooliſh a thing is it, to

Delay

Delay at preſent, upon hopes of hereafter Repentance, that is, in plain *Engliſh*, in hopes of hereafter-Grief, next door to Deſpair, in hopes of being wounded a thouſand times deeper, and being more confounded, and aſhamed, and drinking larger draughts of the Wormwood, and the Gall, than early Converts do. Is not this Folly?

Again, how unreaſonable, and mad a thing is it, to expect that God ſhould preſently open to me, when I call for Mercy, in my laſt extremity, after I have moſt wickedly put him off, and ſacrificed the Male of my Flock, my beſt Years to the Devil, and my Luſts. Can it ſeem reaſonable, that an holy and jealous God ſhould regard ſuch preſumption.

Again, what Folly is it, to defer a work till hereafter, that may be done now at preſent with eaſe, ſince ſhould I live a thouſand years, each day, yea hour's delay, would add ſomething more to the hardneſs of my Heart, and difficulty to my Converſion, *qui non eſt hodie, cras minus aptus erit.* All acts of Sin ſtrengthen the habits within, they engage the heart more to the love of ſin; and the more reſiſtance, always the more impenitence and hardneſs. O fooliſh Youth, haſt thou not enough already to ſink thee? what folly is it to add more weight of guilt: if a man had received one ſtab, it were dangerous; but

ſuppoſe he had a hundred, how hard would be his cure. Oh young man, wo to thee, if thou makeſt thy Converſion thus hazardous by Delays. As in bodily affairs, in caſe of Sickneſs, is it not folly to defer ſending for the Phyſitian, or, in caſe of Poyſon received into the Body, is it not folly to defer the Remedy till to morrow? or in caſe of a Wound received, never to regard the means of healing till it feſter, and turn to a Gangreen? pray what would you ſay, or think of a man, that when Sickneſs or Diſtempers come, ſhould ſay, *I am not at leaſure to be ſick; go, and come at a more convenient time*; would you not conclude, that the Diſeaſe had already ſeiz'd the man's Intellectuals. Alas, the madneſs and folly in ſaying ſo to Repentance, is much more, and much greater, unleſs a man could command the Grace of Repentance at his pleaſure; I remember the Advice one gave to young men, in imitation of *Solomon*, in the 11. *Eccleſ.* 9. 'Rejoyce, *O young man*, &c. *q. d.* 'Walk after the ſight of your own Eyes 'now, and look after the Duty of Repen-'tance when you are blind, and can't ſee. 'Work not while it's Day, but when the 'Night comes; mind matters of leſs mo-'ment, while you can do any thing, and 'your main intereſt, when you are fit for 'nothing. Defer your Repentance till 'hereafter, though you know not but you

'may

'may dye to Night; put it off to a ſick 'Bed, though you cannot tell but ſudden 'Death may prevent your lying ſick at all. 'Run as far as you can out of the way to 'Life, even till out of breath, and then re-'turn. Firſt let your time be ſpent, and 'then improve it. Increaſe your Debts to 'purpoſe, and be ſure that you have a good 'long Score, and then pay. Provoke God 'as much as you can, and then appeaſe him. 'Be ſure you treaſure up as much Wrath 'as you can, and then confidently expect 'Heaven. O the folly of delaying our Repentance; Sin is ſo fortified, and ſtrengthned by delays, that every hour drives the Nail in farther, till it's very difficult removing it. Sin takes the deeper rooting by delays, and requires much more ſtrength and violence to pluck it up, and the heart is in danger of growing to that καρδία ἀμετανόητος that you read of, *Rom.* 2. 5. an irrepentable heart; and altho' God is able to give Repentance, yet there's an infinite peradventure, whether he will or no; for, as *Auguſtine* ſaith *, *That God who promiſeth Pardon to the Penitent, hath not promiſed to morrow to the Sinner that puts off his Repentance.* O the folly of delays, when every moment the Devil will be neater, and God farther off; when the next

* *Qui enim pœnitenti promiſit indulgentiam, dilatori diem craſtinum non promiſit.* Aug. in Pſal. 145. 8.

cloſure with Luſt, may enſnare and enſlave thee for ever! O Young Man, is this thy Prudence, to promiſe to thy ſelf a more convenient Seaſon hereafter, when thou wilt have leſs time, leſs ſtrength, leſs aid and aſſiſtance, leſs tenderneſs of Conſcience, leſs influence of the Spirit; and when thou wilt have more love to thy Luſt, more blindneſs in thy Mind, more hardneſs of Heart, more averſneſs in thy Will to turn to God, more unſenſibleneſs and ſearedneſs in thy Conſcience; or elſe more in danger of downright aud abſolute deſpair? O miſerable folly of delays!

Beſides, if you conſider the ſuſpition of an hereafter-Repentance; true Repentance is never too late, but late Repentance is ſeldom true; which might be abundantly argued, from the uſual experience of Sinners when they are ſick, O what Proteſtations do they then make of their Repentance and Amendment, but commonly return to Sin, as the Dog to the Vomit, when reſtored to health again: So that there is uſually great unſoundneſs in Mens Sick-bed Repentances, by no means is it to be depended on. Surely it would be (compar'd with this) a pardonable folly for a Man to adventure upon Poyſon, becauſe he hath heard there is a certain Antidote in the World to expel it, tho' he cannot tell whether he can get that Remedy or no; To what this is in the preſent Caſe:

It

It would be a piece of madneſs, that would be deſervedly unpardonable, to run the riſque and adventure of a death-bed Repentance; when you are told of the multitudes that periſh, to a very few that are ſaved, pray examine carefully what ſuch a Repentance is made up of; uſually it conſiſts in the paſſionate awakenings of natural Conſcience, upon the Sinner's Alarm to appear before that God to whom he has been a long time eſtranged, and againſt whom he has maintain'd a long and old Enmity; hereupon there ſprings up in his Breaſt a ſervile fear and dread of this holy and juſt God; hence the Sinner being ſtript of all Creature comforts and help, flies and cryes to God for pardon of his Sins, and deliverance from Hell, in great affrightment of Spirit, and O if God will ſpare, what manner of perſon he will be, and the like. Now pray judge righteous Judgment, and make a true eſtimate herein, many ignorant Wretches call this true Repentance, whereas all this is but nature in miſery, crying for eaſe, which the verieſt Reprobate in the World may do, nay, can't but do, if Conſcience be awakened: here is no change of their hearts *from darkneſs to light, and the power and love of ſin, to God and holineſs.* Alas! let but theſe Men be put into their former ſtate of health and temptation again, and they would be the very ſame; a *Balaam* may come thus far to cry out, *O*

that I might dye the death of the Righteous, and my laſt end be like his. There is the ſame love of Sin, and hatred of ſtrict Godlineſs within as ever, which would ſoon appear, if they might but ſtill enjoy their former Vanities: but alas all is under a force, they are launching out into the eternal World, and judgment ſeems to them juſt at hand, now they cry aloud for mercy, and deſire pardon, bewail their abuſe of time, make large offers of Reformation, and yet all this is but as an Iron in the Fire, or a Mariner in a Storm: Well ſaid * *Tertullian, What a mean ſort of good is this, that only excels puniſhment.* It is good to repent and be ſaved, becauſe *who can dwell with everlaſting burning?* All this is good juſt when a Man's a dying. O young man, is this conſiſtent with Reaſon, to venture thy All to all Eternity, upon ſo rotten a foundation? thou wouldſt not venture to put out to Sea in a leaky Veſſel, and wilt thou be ſo mad as to venture thy Soul upon ſuch a bold Preſumption as this? What if (O Youth) after your mad and long Rambles in the ways of Sin, after thou haſt try'd theſe deſperate Concluſions, and thou at laſt begins to come to thy ſelf, and attempts to come to Chriſt, what if he ſhould remand thee, and ſend thee back again, to find Relief among the Huſks and Swine thou ſo lately left? if when you (in your

* *Quale bonum hoc eſt quod melius eſt pœnâ, &c. Tertull.*

your diſtreſs and calamity) ſupplicate with the moſt mournful Note his mercy and compaſſion, he ſhall return you back with this greeting, and ungrateful anſwer, It is now too late, thou ſhouldſt have *remembred me in the days of thy youth*, depart, my patience and compaſſions are at an end, becauſe you refuſed when I called, I will now reject you. O what if God ſhould conclude his day of grace and mercy, juſt as thy time of Religion commenceth? If he end his Patience, as thou beginneſt thy Repentance? If his Ear be ſtop'd, juſt as thy cry for mercy is opening? pray, what then will you do? what ſay you young ones? will you enquire, return, and come now or no? to allude to that of the Prophet, *Iſa.* 21. 11, 12. *Watchman, what of the night? what of the night? if you will enquire, enquire, return and come.* How many expreſſions are here to ſhew the vehemency of the Call. What ſay you Youth? wilt thou dare to run the venture of the loſs of God's acceptance, of Heaven and eternal glory, for a year, a month, a week, a day? ſhall the bleſſed Trinity ſtay till your Luſt will releaſe you? Why then be it known to you, and remember hereafter, that I this day give you notice of it, that *as you ſowe, ſo you ſhall reap*. If you ſowe a deaf Ear to God's call *to day, while it's called to day*, you ſhall reap a deaf Ear to your calls and cryes for mercy, when your *calamity and deſolation cometh*

as

as a whirlwind upon you. O young Men I beſeech you, and O that God would perſuade you by his Spirit this day, to practiſe this advice here exhibited to you; *Flee this youthful Sin of delaying.* The ſooner you come in, the more acceptable it will be to God, the more comfortable to your own Souls, and the more uſeful and beneficial to others. I might enlarge upon all theſe, but I have been long already in other Conſiderations againſt this *Sin of delaying*; and therefore I ſhall only tell you, That no Tongue can relate, no Pen can deſcribe all the advantages of an early Converſion. One days ſweet communion that you will have with a reconciled God in a ſtate of grace, will be more comfortable than a thouſand years of impenitent Sinners, who are or may be in continual fears of death and judgment. But O the bleſſed ſtate of an early Convert, that is at peace with God, his Soul may dwell at eaſe, let what will come that can, in life or death, Sin is pardoned, the ſting of all is removed, *Chriſt's yoke is eaſie, there is no condemnation* to ſuch an one. O the ſweet peace and tranquility of ſuch a Life, what ſhould trouble or diſturb him, that hath good grounds to believe, *That he ſhall be for ever with the Lord, when he ſhall go hence, and be ſeen no more.* Young People are apt to think, that there is no contentment in the ways of God, but they muſt lead ſad and uncomfortable Lives;

Lives; whereas it's moſt manifeſt, that there is nothing tends to free them from diſcontent and uncomfortableneſs, like an early converſion to God. The Kingdom of God conſiſts in joy and peace; and there is a day at hand, when the proudeſt deſpiſer of an holy life ſhall be convinc'd of it. O therefore make a tryal of it, and if you do not find it ſo, take your own courſe, I have no more to ſay, but to pray that God would circumciſe your hearts, and give you wiſdom to take the preſent opportunity, and to admire his mercy that it is not too late.

The next Sin that I ſhall direct Young Ones to flee, is, *An eager purſuit of ſenſual and ſinful Pleaſures, their loving theſe more than God*, &c.

I Have ſhewed you already, how ſtrongly Youth is bent upon Pleaſures, Sports, Games, Feaſts, Paſtimes. O! Young Men love theſe as their Lives, and ſome will as ſoon part with their Lives, as with their youthful Pleaſures; they have had Threatnings, Promiſes, Commands, Intreaties, Mercies, Afflictions, yet nothing to this day could prevail with them. What *Solomon* ſaith of the Fool, Prov. 27. 22. *Tho' thou bray a Fool in a Mortar, yet will not his fooliſhneſs depart from him*; may be applied here, to that exceſs of affection that is found in young Folks

to

to vain and sinful pleasures: there is it's true a great unwillingness in others to forgo the pleasures of Sin, but it strangely tyrannizes over Youth; wherefore I shall lay down some Arguments, to perswade you to be willing to flee this Youthful Lust.

First, Consider the Lord Jesus Christ, (young People) he was not a Man of Pleasures, but a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with Griefs, and how unsuitable are you to him, while you pant after vain Pleasures. I remember I have read of five Men met together, that asked one another, *What means they used to abstain and flee from Sin?*

The first answer'd, *That he continually thought upon the Certainty of Death, and the Uncertainty of the Time of it, and that made him live every day as his last.*

The Second, *Meditated on the severe Account he was to give at the day of judgment, and of the everlasting Torments of Hell, and this kept him from Sin.*

The Third, *Of the vileness and loathsomness of Sin, and of the excellency and beauty of Grace. and this made him abhor Sin.*

The Fourth, *Of the everlasting Rewards and Pleasures provided for those that did abstain from Sin, and this prevailed with him.*

The Fifth and last, *Continually meditated on the Lord Jesus Christ, and of his Love to poor Sin-*

sinners, in dying an accurſed death for them, and this made him aſhamed to ſin.

And truly this laſt is the greateſt of all: O what an Argument is this, to conſtrain you Young Ones to flee ſinful Pleaſures; I beſeech you, for Chriſt's ſake, to flee them. Methinks if Chriſt ſhould come and demand your Life and Blood, they ſhould freely go, and will you not part with your brutiſh Pleaſures for him? You are certainly Enemies to the Croſs of Chriſt, while you mind earthly Pleaſures; he lived a ſelf denying Life, mortified to all the Vanities of this World, to ſet you an Example; he died alſo to redeem you from a vain Converſation.

O Young Man, view thy Pattern, and imitate your Self-denying Saviour, or you are none of his. If a Father or Mother come in competition with his Name and Intereſt, you are bound to hate them, *Luke* 14. 26. much more your youthful Luſts of vile Pleaſure. The Pleaſure of our dear Lord, *was to do the Will of his heavenly Father*, Joh. 4.34. Now ſaith the Apoſtle, in *Phil.* 2. 5. *Let the ſame mind be in you, as was in Chriſt.* And in *Luke* 14.27. Our Saviour ſaith, *Whoſoever doth not come after me, cannot be my Diſciple.* You are not to come after us Miniſters one ſtep, but as we conform to Chriſt. O look unto Jeſus, Young Ones, did he affect Sports and Games? Did he uſe to ſpend hours

hours at Cards or Dice, *&c?* You read of whole Nights he redeem'd for, and ſpent in Prayer, and how he went up and down always doing good. O what a bleſſed way would this be, to recover the licentious Youth of this Age, to the gravity and purity of Religion, if they would write after, and draw each line of their Lives according to this holy Pattern. I have read of an Earl called *Elzearus*, that was given much to immoderate anger, and the means he uſed to cure this diſordered affection, was by ſtudying Chriſt and his patience, in ſuffering the Injuries and Affronts that were offered to him; and he never ſuffered this Meditation to paſs from him, till he found his heart transformed into the ſimilitude of Jeſus Chriſt. O Young Men, you are all diſtemper'd with the immoderate love of vain pleaſure; O flee to Mount *Calvary*, to a crucified Jeſus, and there repreſent to thy Soul his Sorrow and Agonies, till thou find this Luſt crucified. Argue thus with thy ſelf, what did ſo dear, ſo great and glorious a Perſon as the Son of God, deny himſelf thoſe ineffable pleaſures above, that he had in his Father's boſom, and come down here on earth, and took to himſelf an houſe of Clay, our Fleſh, which proved to him an houſe of mourning all the days of his fleſh, and then dyed an ignominious, painful, accurſed death, and all this for me, to redeem me from the pleaſures

of

of Sin, and deſtroy theſe works of the Devil: And ſhall I think much of denying my ſelf a few draughts of vain delight for him, who drank of the bitter Cup of God's wrath, and the gall and vinegar for me? And then,

Secondly, Conſider that either you muſt forſake theſe ſinful pleaſures for a time here, or your ſweet Saviour for ever hereafter: *For no Man can ſerve two Maſters, he will either love and live to the one, and hate and leave the other*, or elſe *è contra*. Therefore what Chriſt ſaid to the *Jews* concerning his Diſciples, John 18. 8. *If ye ſeek me, let theſe go their way.* That may I ſay, to you Young folk, concerning your ſinful pleaſures, if ye ſeek an intereſt in the bleſſed Jeſus, you muſt let theſe go; it is made the Badge of a graceleſs, chriſtleſs Man, in that of 2 *Tim.* 3. 4. *A lover of pleaſure, more than of God.* And our Saviour, in *Luke* 18. 14. tells you, *That pleaſures choke the ſeed of God's Word*; they nouriſh the heart, and fatten it into a ſenſleſs ſtupidity. And 1 *Tim.* 5. 6. the Apoſtle deſcribeth the unconverted Widow thus, *She that liveth in pleaſure, is dead while ſhe liveth.* And then,

Thirdly, Conſider Young Man, *That God will bring thee to judgment for all thy ſinful pleaſures.* Is it not enough to embitter all thy pleaſures in the fleſh, to read in Faith that

that one Scripture, Eccles. 11.9. *Rejoyce, O young Man*, &c. *but know that God will bring thee to judgment.* You are apt to think that you shall hear of them no more, but be you assured all must come into the Judgment. O Young Men, how many are now under wrath, that when on Earth, were eager in their pursuit of Games and Sports, &c. O Youth, consider, the Feet of them that have carried multitudes of your Age to Perdition, stand ready waiting for the word of Commission to carry you away also. Hence it was, that the primitive Christians used to pray, *Domine hic ure, hic seca, ut in aeternum parcas.* Lord, burn here, cut here, that thou may'st spare hereafter. O remember *Abraham*'s words to him that lived in pleasure while on Earth, and at last dying, and lifting up his eyes in Hell, and calling for a drop of water to cool his tormented tongue, *Remember* (saith *Abraham*) *thou hadst thy pleasures in thy life-time, and* Lazarus *his sorrows*, Luke 16. 25. O that this were more thought on by our jolly Youngsters! *Paul* saw need of using this tremendous Argument in 2 Cor. 5. 10, 11. *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ*, &c. And then it follows, *Knowing the terrors of the Lord, we persuade Men:* To what? why to Self-judging, and Godly-sorrowing and mourning for Sin, that so they may not be condemned of the Lord, at that great and ter-

terrible day. Hence *Paul* himself beat down his Body, denied himself fleshly pleasures, lest at that day he should be a *Cast-away*. Hence *Peter* interrogates, *Seeing all these things shall be dissolved at that day of judgment, what manner of persons ought we to be, in all holy conversation and godliness; not in chambering and wantonness*, 2 Pet. 3. 11. Hence also is the force of that great Command to a present Repentance without delay, *Acts* 17. 30. *Because God hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the world by Christ.* It was this that made voluptuous *Felix* tremble. O Young Man, had thou but a lively impression of this upon thy heart, O how soon would it wither all thy pleasures at the root? and instead of Ease, it would fill thee with Remorse and Bitterness. O therefore when this thy Youthful Lust grows boistrous, then use this Goad to awaken thee, and oppose this strong and terrible Argument for the cooling and quelling thy Lust after pleasure, viz. *That God will bring thee to Judgment.* You read of *Moses* when young, and the temptation of pleasure strong, yet he chose rather *to suffer Affliction*, than *to enjoy Sins pleasures, that are but for a season.* And why? because *he by Faith saw a day of final and further recompences at hand*, Heb. 11. 25. And then,

Fourthly, Consider, *That all thy youthful pleasures are but for a season*, Heb. 11. 25. And you read in Job 21. 13, 14. *They spend their days in mirth, and in a moment they go down to the grave, or hell.* Who do? why all your Pleasure-mongers from one Age to another. Look ye, were it possible for you to have a sight of the damned in Hell, there would you find the many thousands that spent their few days on earth in the pleasures of Sin. And it's but a while, but you, and all of your complexion and temper, that love Pleasures more than God, must vanish away and never laugh more; never jest it, game it more; O the doleful hour is at hand! The stolen waters of Sin's pleasure are sweet, but short, like *Naboth's* Vineyard, which *Ahab* so eagerly thirsted after; he got it, (it's true) but he could not keep it. Sins pleasures are compared to the *crackling of thorns under a pot.* If any should ask, *Why they should be so short?* I would have such to bethink themselves, *Why they should be at all?* I am sure the All wise God's thoughts are not as yours, and those whose distempered Souls (through grace) are begun to be cured, think otherwise. Ask a converted Soul, What pleasure there is in Sin, and he will tell you, it is *the very gall of bitterness.* Alas! Young Man, it is a disease upon thee, that makes thee think of any pleasure at all in Sin; but yet

that miſtaken Pleaſure of thy ſick and
leaſed mind is but momentary, and a
ry Shadow. Why then art thou ſo ea-
r after Pleaſure? O the great Cheats poor
ners put upon themſelves. Hence plea-
r Sins are called *Lying Vanities.*

O young man, remember thy time on Earth
but ſhort, 1 *Cor.* 7. 29. and therefore thy
eaſures in Sin cannot be long: O how ſmall
iſtance is there between the Sports and
mes of Youth, and the mortal Pangs and
ins of Death? how ſoon will thy clear
rning be overcaſt with evening Clouds?
e pleaſures of Sin will be quickly over,
the pain will be for ever; as *Job* ſaith
mans Life on Earth, *Job* 14. 1. *His days*
few, but his Troubles are many; So may
y of Sin, its pleaſures are few, but its Ter-
s are many, like a ſhort Feaſt, but a
g reckoning; therefore when you are in
nger of being enticed with Sin's pleaſures,
eſeech you to endeavour and (O that God
ould teach you) to improve this Conſi-
ration, that they are but for a ſeaſon.
here is a notable Story that I meet with
Mr *Burrough's Moſes* his choice, concern-
one *Theodorus* a young man, who at a
e of great Feſtivity and Jollity in *Egypt*
his Fathers Houſe with-drew from all the
mpany, and got alone, and fell a medita-
g thus, *Here is delight, and content in the*
, I may have what I will deſire, but how

long will it last? And upon this Meditatio
thinking with himself, this will not ho
long, he withdrew himself into a priva
Room, and fell down upon the Earth, a
with many Tears cryed out thus unto G
in Prayer; *O Lord* (says he) *my Heart*
open unto thee, I indeed know not what to a
but only this, Lord let me not dye eternally;
Lord, thou knowest I love thee, O let me l
eternally to praise thee! And when his M
ther came to him, and would have h
him come to the rest of the company
were bidden, he made an excuse, a
would not, only upon this meditation,
cause he saw these things were but for a
son, and would not last. O that it mig
please the Lord, to give you young on
Wisdom, and a Heart, alike to know
brevity and vanity of all fleshly pleasure
as to draw off your Hearts from them,
to make your choice of those pleasures
are for ever, at the right hand of G
And then,

Fifthly, Consider youthful and sens
Pleasures are vile in their nature. *Ci*
(though a Heathen) thought not that
worthy of the name of a man, that sp
one day in sensual Pleasures: And
accounted a Life of Pleasure, a Life of Be
And what doth God say in the Script
of the Person that liveth in pleasure? y
ma

may ſee 1 *Tim.* 5. 6. *Such a one is dead while he liveth.* And in the 21. *Job* 11, 12, 13, *Such ſay to the Almighty, depart from us.* Pleaſures they alienate, and take away the Heart from God, and the things of God, they ſtuff the heart with manifold Evils, they deaden it with ſecurity, they harden it in Sin, and ſwell it with Vanity, and ſour it with an enmity againſt the ſeveri- and ſtrictneſs of Religion; in a word Pleaſures diſpoſe a Perſon to all manner of impieties, and expoſe a perſon to all man- of miſeries. *Ariſtotle* maketh mention a parcel of Ground in *Sicily* that ſends forth ſuch a ſtrong ſmell of fragrant Flowers all the Fields thereabouts, that no Hound can hunt there, the ſcent is ſo confounded with the ſmell of thoſe Flowers: thus in our centious Age, Pleaſures hinder us in our ritual chaſe, they take away all ſcent, and ſenſe too of Heaven, and heavenly ings. Who is fit for any holy exercíſe, hat hath been immerſing himſelf in ſenſual leaſures? Can the Heart, that but juſt now ath been enlarged and let out, or poured t in vain and youthful pleaſures, be pre- ared for the holy preſence of God in Pray- or Meditation? What think you? doth hambering and Wantonneſs, doth Ga- ing and Sportfulneſs, fit you for commu- on with God? O how much ſooner do ey ripen you for Hell and Deſtruction.

Wherefore, O young man, flee these vain pleasures, that brutifie and vilifie thy Soul, that resemble thee to a Beast, and ripen thee for the Devil, that cannot stand with the infinite Love, but hatred of God. O flee these. And then,

Sixthly, Consider youthful, sensual pleasures, are not only short of their time, and vile in their nature, but most bitter and pernicious in their end. *Stolen Waters are sweet, and Bread eaten in secret,* saith *Solomon,* Prov. 9 17. *But in the end it bites like a Serpent, Prov.* 32. 27. *and stingeth like an Adder.* O Youth, such are all Sin's pleasure, whether you believe it or no, you shall be sure to feel it after a season, for your pleasures are all but for a season, and then followeth the Curse of the Law, the wrath of God, the terrours of Conscience, the guilt of Sin, and these are enough to drown thy pleasue, and distract thy Spirits; like to that kind of Honey, that Historians tell us of in *Affrica,* lusciously sweet, but affects all that eat of it with a mortal Madness and Frenzy, and the reason they assign is that the Bees gather it from poysonous Weeds; thus sensual sinful Pleasures, as *Solomon* saith, *Eccles.* 2. 2. affect with madness. Hence in the 7 *Eccles.* 2. he affirmeth, *that it is better to go to the House of Mourning than Feasting*: You have a Scripture

ture very full and appoſite to this purpoſe in that in 20. *Job* 16. where *Zophar* ſpeaking of the wicked Pleaſure-monger, ſaith, *He ſhall ſuck the poiſon of Aſps.* There is an old Interpreter * I have met with, that reads it, *He ſhall ſuck the Head of Aſps.* The Hebrew word [*Roſh*] ſignifying both *caput*, and *veneum*, Head and Poyſon. Now what is it to ſuck the Head of Aſps? *Pliny* in his *Natural Hiſtory*, tells us that the Aſp, or ſhe Viper, engendring with the Male, takes his Head in her mouth, and being overcome with the pleaſure of the act, bites it off, whereby he periſheth: after which ſhe conceiving, the young within her become impatient of ſtaying their full time, and they eat out through her ſide; whereby ſhe periſheth. And ſo it is with the Senſualiſt that is all for pleaſure in Sin, as if you look back to the 12. *ver.* of this 20. of *Job*, you ſhall find *though wickedneſs be ſweet in the mouth, yet it is but as the ſucking of the Head of Aſps, they ſhall periſh by it.* In the cloſe of the 12. *ver.* it is ſaid, *to be Gall of Aſps*, by which is meant, both the bitterneſs, and deſtructiveneſs of ſinful Pleaſures: *His Wickedneſs* (ſaith *Zophar*) *though ſweet and delicious in his Mouth*, that is the act of committing it; yet when its turned in his Bowels, that is after the commiſſion of it, *it is the Gall of Aſps.* O its grievous to him, he wiſheth he had never done it. So *Prov.*

* *Xantus Paginus.*

5. 4. ſpeaking of the end of Sin's pleaſure, he tells you, *its bitter as Wormwood.* It is like a Pill, wrapt up in Sugar, which when the Sugar (which was over it) is melted, then the bitterneſs of the Pill ſhews it ſelf: So when the pleaſure of Sin is waſted, then the ſorrow appears. I have read of a moſt pleaſant and luſcious ſort of Fruit in the *Weſt-Indies*, but withal that theſe dainties are ſo ſauced with the intollerable ſcorching heat of the Sun by day, and a multitude of ſtinging Creatures by night, that the People that dwell in thoſe parts, expoſe themſelves to danger to gather them; which made the *Spaniards* to call them, the Comfits of Hell; and truly what are the pleaſures of Sin but ſuch Comfits of Hell? there is ſome carnal pleaſure that delights a rank, unhallowed Palate; but here is the miſery of it, they are ſerved in with the ſcorching fiery wrath of God, and the ſtinging of a guilty reſtleſs Conſcience, ſo that the fears of the one, and the anguiſh of the other, are ſurely able to melt away that little pleaſure they afford. O that young ones would ſeriouſly conſider how bitter Sin's pleaſures will be in the end, *brevis eſt voluptas peccati, ſed perpetua pœna peccatoris.* And *Bernard* ſaith *momentarium eſt quod delectat, æternum quod cruciat.* O commune with thine own Heart, enter the Cloſet within thy own Breaſt, and ſay, What ſhall I be taken with a little ſeeming ſweetneſs, and pleaſure in

Sin,

Sin, when within a moment or two, this will be turned into the Gall, yea Poyſon of Aſps. O young men, evermore keep your Eye on the ending of Sin, how it goes off at laſt, you may ſee in *Cain*, and *Spira*, with hideous groans, and conſuming griefs; it comes on like an Harlot very Comically, *Come, let us take our fill of Pleaſure*; but it goes off like *Rachel*, weeping and bitterly lamenting. *Solomon* ſaith, in *Prov.* 23.17,18. *My Son, envy not Sinners, for ſurely there is an end*; and a ſad and woful end too, envy them not, they are rather objects of Compaſſion and Pity, to ſee a Sinner merrily for a minute, ſwallowing the bait of pleaſure, and then to conſider his end is to be torn for ever with the hook of Vengeance; and after a little gigling, and fooliſh mirth, to be caſt into a Lake of Fire and Brimſtone for ever; O ſad end! O happy is he that foreſeeth the bitter end of Sin at laſt, and ſhunneth it, by forgoing, and fleeing the bewitching pleaſure of Sin at preſent, and wiſe is he that takes up (out of the Word of God) the ſame thoughts of Sin, now amidſt all temptations and allurements to it; as the worſt, at laſt will be forced to take up, out of their own experience and feeling, amidſt all the torments of Hell. Sure it is better to go to Heaven with labour, than to Hell with pleaſure, and to be preſerved in Brine, than to rot

in

in Honey (as one saith) to be fed upon salt Marshes, and short Commons, and to live, than to be glutted in rank Pastures, and so fatted up for destruction. Wherefore, O youth, call not, choose not that pleasure now, that thousands are suffering the wrath of God for in Hell. All you that have adventured, and took the sweet Bait, my advice to such is, let them vomit up their Morsels again, and smite on their Breast, and lament with penitent remorse, that ever they should be such fools, as to delight in that which hath grieved God, and wounded their own Souls, and never any more return with the Dog to the Vomit. And then,

Seventhly, Consider youthful sensual Pleasures are deceitful, they mock thee, and make a Fool of thee, and then thou makest a mock and sport of Sin. Sin smiles with enticing blandishments, as Satan on our first Parents. *Gen* 3 5. *O Ye shall be as Gods*; So here Sin promiseth, O ye shall be thus, and thus advanced, and advantag'd: But were our first Parents as Gods, by hearkening to Satan, and eating of the forbidden Fruit? or were they not cheated, and instead of being like God, they became like Satan. It is observed by the *Mythologists*, that Pleasure went out at first on occasion to Bathe her self, and having stript off

off her Cloaths, laid them by the Water side; but Sorrow having hid her self in the Covert as unseen, steals the Cloaths away, puts them on, and so departs. Hence multitudes are cheated, they run, and ride, court, and woo Pleasure; which they have no sooner obtained, but they perceive their Error, alas it is nothing but Sorrow got in Pleasures Cloaths. O young man, that art so eager after Pleasures, you know not what you so earnestly reach after, do but enquire of those that have detected the Cheat, and they will tell you, there is nothing in all the world so deceitful as Sin: it deceived Angels above, and Man beneath, it promiseth credit, and pays with shame; it promiseth ease, and pays with pain; it promiseth Bread, and pays with Stones; it promiseth a Paradise of pleasure, and pays with a Wilderness of Sorrows; it promiseth Liberty, and pays with Bondage; it promiseth Satisfaction and Content, and pays with nothing but vexation and disappointment. O young man, enquire e're thou venturest, enquire *cui bono?* to what purpose? What shall I gain by Pleasures? Shall I be more free for, and cheerful in the Service of God? will my Soul be more heavenly? or my Body more healthy? what will come of this pleasure? will it forward me in the way to Heaven? or Hell? will it pay charges at last? This

hunting

hunting after Senſual Pleaſures, and neglecting God, and my precious Soul what aſpect will it have in its final review? Alas young men, if you would bring things to a cloſe tryal and ſcrutiny, the vail of Sins pretences is ſo thin, that you might preſently detect its falſhood, and in unmasking and diſcovering it Lyes, you would receive much advantage, in fortifying you againſt its Allurements. I end this with St. *Paul*'s Exhortation, *Heb.* 3. 13. *Exhort one another daily leſt you be hardned through the deceitfulneſs of Sin.* And then,

Eighthly, and Laſtly, Conſider in order to the fleeing of this youthful Sin, of an eager purſuit of vain Pleaſure, that you ſhall not looſe, but gain true pleaſure, and by abandoning the ſpurious and pernicious Pleaſures of Sin, a ſound Converſion of thy Heart and Life to God, will but exchange thy Pleaſures, and exchange is no robbery. Sure it would be a great favour and kindneſs to take from thee the filthy, muddy ditch-waters of Sin, and preſent thee with the pure and precious Waters of Life. Were that man hurt that ſhould have a glaſs of Poyſon took out of his Hand, and a Cup of Sack put in? O youth, I muſt not ſpare to tell thee, that thou wilt never taſte one drop of true Delight and Pleaſure, till thou art converted, and become ſeriouſly Religious: It is no part of God's meaning, when we

we enter his ſweet Service, that we ſhould be debarred of Pleaſures, *for the Ways of Wiſdom are Ways of Pleaſantneſs, and all her Paths are Paths of Peace, Prov.* 3. 17. But only that we ſhould exchange the Onions and Garlick of *Egypt*, for the Milk and Honey of *Canaan*; *Iſaac* muſt not be ſacrificed, but the *Ram*; So here, all ramiſh, and rank Pleaſures muſt, but not the Soul-raviſhing, and refreſhing pleaſures at God's right hand, *Pſal.* 16. 11. O that you would but make Experiment hereof, you will find One Hour's praying, better than a thouſand of prophane fudling; (as Mr. *An. Burg.* ſaith) thou wilt find one hours enjoyment of Chriſt, as thy Husband by Faith, better then all the wanton Dalliances, and unchaſte imbracements of unlawful objects. So that, young man, thou fleeſt from true Pleaſures, when thou fleeſt not thy youthful ſenſual Pleaſures: the Lord bleſs theſe Conſiderations to thee. Now this brings me to lay down ſome Rules to direct Youth how they may flee the next youthful Sins.

Remedies

Remedies againſt thoſe Youthful Sins of Flexibility in yielding to Temptations, and readily going down the ſtream, following a multitude to do evil, and keeping ill Company, &c.

THeſe Sins I have ſhewed you before, are eſpecially the Sins of Youth, to be eaſily drawn and enticed to do as others do, *&c.* Now I ſhall very briefly offer you ſome Conſiderations for the fleeing of them.

1. Conſider Chriſt's Flock is but a little Flock, and the Gate and Way to Life eternal is *ſtraight and narrow, and they are but few that walk therein.* If you will not be content to go to Heaven with a few, you are never like to come there. The beaten Path is the common Road to Hell, which hath uſed in all Ages to be thronged with Troops; but Heaven's ſtraight way, from the time of the old World to this day, hath at beſt had but a paucity of Walkers, and ſometimes a ſingularity, as *Noah* in his day was ſingular, and *Elijah* in his day left alone, when there were 400 falſe Prophets of *Baal*; and *Jeremiah*, was fain to weep in ſecret. I confeſs this is a ſhrewd temptation to young People, and of all Ages, that age of Youth is moſt in danger of ſtumbling at it; but O Youth, is it not better to be ſaved alone,

or

or with a few, than to periſh with millions? Had you lived in *Noah*'s time when the Flood came, would you not have rather choſe to have been preſerved with *Noah*'s Family alone, than drown'd with the reſt, tho' you had all the world to keep you company? I remember the learned *Breerwood* divides the World into 30 parts, and after a diligent pondering of it, telleth us, that 19 of the 30 are Paganiſh; and of the 11 parts that remain, he ſaith Mahumetiſm takes up ſix, ſo that there remains but five for Chriſtianiſm. O that the Deſire of all Nations might come, and accompliſh that Prophecy, Iſa. 2. 1, 2. *When the mountain of the houſe of the Lord ſhall be exalted on the top of the mountains, and all Nations ſhall flow into it.* So that you may ſee by this, O Youth, that thou muſt either renounce all hopes of Heaven, and lay aſide thy Chriſtianity, or elſe be willing to be ſingular to the World that lies in wickedneſs; it's the World's faſhion to be prayerleſs and graceleſs: but will you read *Rom.* 12. 1. with *Jam.* 1. 17. And then with theſe Scriptures, ſee 1 *John* 2. 15, 16. But it may be objected, That you are come out of the Pagan and Mahumetan World, you go with the Chriſtian World; and therefore what can be ſaid againſt you, but that you may do as other Chriſtians do? I anſwer, with the Apoſtle that ſpake expreſly of our times, in that of

2 *Tim.*

2 *Tim.* 1. and the five first Verses: *This know, that in the last days perilous times shall come; Men shall be so and so, even in the Church of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power.* Well, what Advice doth he give as to these nominal Christians? why, in the very next words, he saith, *From such turn away.* Alas! in the Christian World the number of sound Believers is but small, indeed if all that name the Name of Christ, might pass for true Christians, the number would be great; but if no more must be accounted true Christians, than *such as are born again, and all old things are done away, and all things become new, being dead to sin, who once were dead in sin,* &c. O then the number is but small! It's amazing to me, that strange blindness and heavy judgment that is fallen upon thousands of titular Christians at this day, they will severely condemn a Man that he is no good Christian, that doth not profess his Faith in Christ, and come to Church, and the like; and yet will hug themselves with this, that they are good Protestants and Christians, altho' they will make nothing of omission of Closet and Family-Prayer; they will many of them swear and curse, and live in Rioting and Drunkenness, yet if they but come to Church, &c. all is well. It were impossible to reckon up here the thousands of ways how Satan and Sin blind poor Sinners in the Christian World

World to their everlasting destruction. Now
en, O young Man, consult not with flesh
d blood, it may be there are many about
e, carnal Friends and Neighbors, that
ve no fear of God, and there are seeking to
w you off: O remember this advice,
t it's infinitely better to be saved with a
, than be damn'd with a multitude.

2. Consider ill Company, whereunto
uth is exceedingly prone, is a Self-destroy-
Evil; nothing more emboldens Sinners
wickedness. A company of wanton, loose
uths met together, is like a Pest-house for
ction; they do a world of mischief in
milies, Churches, Kingdoms; here it is
so many of *England's*, *London's* Youth
train'd up for Hell, they soon ascend *the*
t *of the Scorner*, and so are quickly ripe
a Descent down to Hell. Here they sowe
ows under one anothers Elbows, and stu-
ously argue one another to damnation;
they let flie against Religion, deriding
Godliness, jeering at others, saying, *What*
grow precise? You turn Fool? Thus as
od sought the death of Christ, and de-
yed the young Babes in *Bethlehem*; so
e seek the destruction of any hopeful
nnings and good motions that are at any
e found in persons of tender years: And
to be lamented exceedingly, the sad Suc-
this hath had in this City, O the innu-

merable Tears and Groans of godly Parents that this hath coſt! And, after all, no recovery of their prodigal Children out of this Snare of the Devil's ill Company. The Lord be merciful to us, and convince the Youth (into whoſe hands this Book ſhall fall) of this Nation, of this City, of the truth of this, and cauſe them to keep at the utmoſt diſtance from this Pit of deſtruction. It is upon this account that wiſe *Solomon* ſo frequently calls upon the young Man, *Not to come near the borders of this temptation, not to paſs on that ſide of the way, or near the threſhold of the houſe where this bait is laid.* O young Man, be watchful of your Company, the greateſt danger is when you are among vain and carnal Friends, and Acquaintance; theſe are the great Impediments in your way to Heaven. In all probability many had been converted, if they had aſſociated with gracious perſons. The *Man after God's own heart*, begins his firſt *Pſalm* with, *Bleſſed is the Man that walketh not in the company of the ungodly.* O it's an excellent means to the ſaving of Souls to be there where there is continual helps to Converſion and Holineſs, as Prayers, and heavenly Inſtructions, and godly Examples: whereas among the ungodly, there are continual temptations to Sin; wicked Society is the Devil's Boat, wherein he ferrieth over multitudes to Hell. O young Man, as you would

would not be gathered with the ungodly at last, take heed of joining with them now. It was the Prayer of a godly Person under trouble, on a dying Bed, *O Lord, let me not go to Hell, where the wicked are; for, Lord, thou knowest, I never loved their Company here!* O it's a Soul-destroying Evil to keep company with those whose nearness will set me farther off from God, to be there where Worldliness, Prophaneness, and Wantonness, and Sensuality reign, what is this, but the very Suburbs of Hell? And then

3. Consider what an Honour and Commendation it is to resist Temptation while you are Young, and the sollicitations of vain persons are strong, O then, to flee their enticements, how excellent and laudable is it? It was *Lot*'s unhappiness to dwell in *Sodom*, but it was high honour to be righteous there. *It shewed* (saith an ingenious Writer) *that his holiness was of a strong complexion, to retain its healthfulness in so corrupt an Air.* It's a great Sin to be bad among the good, but it is an high Honour to be good among the bad. O remember, Young Man, how well God likes it, when evil Company do strongly and violently draw and entice thee to the service of the Devil, the Flesh and the World, then to break through all those hellish importunities as *Joseph* did, and *cleave to the Lord* with an invincible and holy resolution. See the

honour of this in that ſacred and ſweet portion of Scripture, 2 *Cor.* 6. 14. to the end: *I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they ſhall be my people; wherefore come out from among them, and be ye ſeparate, ſaith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and I will be a Father to you, and ye ſhall be my Sons and Daughters, ſaith the Lord God Almighty.* If therefore you flee, and withdraw from evil Company, you ſhall be honoured with God's Company and Acquaintance, and what can you deſire more? See how *David* triumpheth in this Priviledge, *Pſal.* 23. 4. *Tho' I walk through the valley of the ſhadow of death, yet will I fear none ill:* why? *becauſe thou art with me.* Hence *Iſa.* 43. 2. *When thou paſſeſt through the water, I will be with thee,* fear not drowning. When fleſh and heart faileth, God will never.

4. Conſider, *That yielding to the enticements of the ungodly, and joining with them, is not only a foul Sin, but a fearful ſign of a graceleſs perſon; for what fellowſhip hath righteouſneſs with unrighteouſneſs? and what communion hath light with darkneſs? and what concord hath Chriſt with* Belial? *and what agreement hath the Temple of God with Idols?* Now this Argument ſhould mightily move you to abhor and flee the company of the wicked, as you would a houſe marked out for

for the Plague. It was the saying of an Heathen, *That Company is of an assimulating nature.* Seest thou a Person choosing communion with one that is carnal, that liveth after the flesh, *&c.* You may be sure that that Man is so too; for as Face answereth to Face, so do Mens Hearts and Lives to one another after their kind. They that are after the Spirit, do all savour and chuse a spiritual Conversation; so they that are after the Flesh, do chuse a carnal Conversation. Hence *David*, who was a gracious Man, proveth it by this mark, *Psal.* 16. 3. speaking of the Saints, the excellent ones of the earth, (saith he) *in whom is all my delight.* And the heavenly Apostle *John* giveth you this very mark of true godliness, in 1 *Joh.* 3. 14. And, on the other hand, a keeping and loving the company of ungodly persons, is made the badge of an unconverted person, *Hos.* 7. 8. Ephraim *he hath mixed himself among the People.* What People? why, *the idolatrous Heathens.* And what's this a sign of? why, that he was but an *Hypocrite*, elegantly expressed in that Metaphor that followeth, Ephraim *is a Lake not turned.* O therefore, as you would escape the mark of an Enemy to God and Godliness: Flee this youthful Lust of ill Company, *have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them*, Eph. 5. 11. *Company not with him that is a Fornicator*, 1 Cor. 5. 9.

Walk not in the way, enter not into the path of evil Men, Prov. 1. 1. and 4. 14. And this brings me to lay down Remedies againſt the next Sin that Youth are prone to, *viz. The Sin of Intemperance.*

Remedies againſt the Youthful Luſt of Intemperance.

THis is a Sin Youth is much given to, as I have in the beginning ſhewed, now in order to the fleeing of it.

Firſt, Labour after a diſtinct and clear knowledge what it is? wherein it ſtands? The Schoolmen ſay, a perſon is guilty of this Sin theſe five ways when he eats and drinks: 1. *Præproperè*, too haſtily. 2. *Lautè*, too daintily. 3. *Nimis*, too much. 4. *Ardenter*, too vehemently. 5. *Studiosè*, too carefully.

1. If he eat too ſoon or haſtily, before the proper Seaſon, Iſa. 5. 11. *Wo to them that riſe up early, that they may follow ſtrong drink.* And Eccl. 10. 17. *Wo to the Land whoſe Princes eat in the morning.* A time wherein the Soul is to be feaſted at the Throne of Grace, and in the word of God's Grace, Prayer, and reading the Scripture, according to that excellent Rule in *Matth.* 6. 33. *Firſt ſeek the kingdom of God.* And then a perſon may be ſaid

ſaid to eat too ſoon or haſtily, when he falls on without Prayer, or craving of a Bleſſing; it was the continual practice of our dear Saviour, who is our Example, to look up to his Father for a Bleſſing, e're he would partake of the Creature.

2. If a perſon eat and drink too daintily, when there is an exceſs in point of Coſtlineſs and Curioſity; Manna had been better for the *Iſraelites*, than Quails. Holy *Jacob*'s ſanctified deſires extended no farther, than *if thou wilt give me Bread to eat*; mark it, not ſumptuous delicate Fare, but *Bread*, Gen. 28. 20. And *Elijah* was content *with a Cruiſe of Water*, and *a Cake on the Coals*, while *Jezabel*'s 400 Prophets were pamper'd at her full Table. Chriſt has taught us herein in that Petition, how to regulate our deſires, *Give us this day our daily Bread.* Pray obſerve it, no more than *plain Bread.* And the Apoſtle ſaith, *Having food and rayment, let us therewith be content*, 1 Tim. 6. 8. Rayment, not Ornament: So that when we (without cauſe) crave delicate Fare, and laſh out beyond that proportion our Eſtates and Incomes will bear, we are guilty of this Sin: And then when we are too curious about the Sorts of Meat and Drink, and their Dreſſing and Sawces, we herein generally ſend in Ammunition to the ſenſual Appetite, to rebel againſt Reaſon and Grace.

3. We offend, and are guilty of this Sin of *Intemperance*, when we exceed as to the quantity, eating and drinking more than what fits us for our general, and particular calling; as we muſt not neglect our Bodies, ſo on the other hand we muſt not pamper them; *Take heed* (ſaith our Saviour) *leſt at any time your Hearts be overcharged with Surfeiting*, &c. and ſo that Day come upon you at unawares. This was the Sin of the Old World, and *Sodom*; and it is *England*'s and *London*'s Sin, eſpecially the younger ſort, at this day.

4. We offend, and are guilty of this Sin, when we feed eagerly, and greedily, or as St. *Jude* ſpeaketh in the 12. ver. *They feed without fear*, not regarding God's awful Diſpenſations in the world, as you have it ſet forth in that 6. *Amos*, *Wo to them that are at eaſe in* Zion, ver. 1. *That lie upon Beds of Ivory, and ſtretch themſelves upon their Couches, and eat the Lambs out of the Flock, and the Calves out of the midſt of the Stall*, ver. 4. *That drink Wine in Bowls, but are not grieved at the Afflictions of Joſeph*, ver. 6. When the Church of God is drinking Blood and Tears, it is unſeaſonable to drink Wine in Bowls: *Daniel* would eat no pleaſant Bread, nor drink Wine, when it went ill with the poor People of God.

5. We

5. We offend, and are guilty of this Sin, when we eat ſtudiouſly, when we ſtudy to pamper, and make proviſion for the Fleſh, and to pleaſe our Appetite, as if we were Debtors to the Fleſh to live to it, and cater for it.

6. We offend herein, when we make the pleaſing of our Appetite our main end, in Eating and Drinking; and not the glorifying of God, and preparing us for his ſervice. The All-wiſe God never gave us our Appetites, to be our rule, or our end, in eating and drinking; but to be governed by Grace and Reaſon, to an higher end than pleaſing the Fleſh.

Now having ſhewn you wherein this Sin ſtands, the next direction in order to ſee it, is as followeth.

Secondly, Study how hateful this Sin is to God, and how hurtful it is to your ſelves, and others; it is hateful to God, as it takes the heart off from him, and Idolatrouſly ſets it upon the Throat, and the Belly: hence you have it deſcribed, in that 3. *Phil.* 19. *Whoſe end is deſtruction, whoſe God is their Belly, being enemies to the Croſs of Chriſt.* Hence Gluttons are commonly called Belly-Gods. And you may further ſee how odi-

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ous it is to God in that thundring Scripture, *Isa.* 22. 14. *In that day did the Lord call for Weeping, and Mourning, and behold eating of Flesh, and drinking of Wine, saying, Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we shall dye——Surely this Iniquity shall not be purged away, till you dye, saith the Lord of Hosts.* Again, it is hateful to God, as it is a notorious Transgression of his holy Law, *Ephes.* 5. 18. *Luke* 21. 34. *Prov.* 23 20. It is a Sin so expresly against the command of God, that Gluttons and Drunkards can't plead ignorance, especially such as live under the Gospel: So that it must needs be hateful to God, seeing it is Rebellion against the Light, *Job* 24. 13 hence *David* expostulates in *Psal.* 10. 13. *Wherefore doth the Wicked contemn God?* Again, it must needs be hateful to God, as it carrieth in it a hatred of God; if *the Friendship of this World is enmity with God*, as St. *James* affirmeth, in the 4. *Jam.* 4. What is then friendship with the Lusts of the Flesh. O young men, think of it seriously, when you are tempted to Riot, and Excess, this is direct enmity to God, and therefore most hateful to him; and can your feeble Hands grasp, and make your part good with Omnipotency? Is a terrible thing to renounce the Heaven of God's love and favour, for the pleasing of my Throat; but directly to run into the Hell of his hatred, O what madness

is

this? It were much better a thouſand times, that thou ſhouldſt never eat bit, or drink drop more, than do ſo. And then as it is thus hateful to God, ſo it is hurtful to your ſelves, and others. (1.) To your ſelves, and that both as to your Bodies and Souls. Intemperance is the bane of the Body, as it fills it with Diſeaſes, and oppreſſeth Nature, conſuming its animal and vital Spirits, and ſo is a degree of ſelf murder. *Who hath Wo? who hath Sorrow?* but the Glutton and Drunkard, *Prov.* 23. 29. Hence are thoſe proverbial Sayings, *Meat kills as many as the Muſquet, and the Board as the Sword*, and *much Meat, much Malady. Plures pereunt crapulâ, quam capulâ*, &c. It brings ruin to a man's Eſtate. *Prov.* 23. 21. *The Drunkard and the Glutton ſhall come to poverty.* Many a man hath become by intemperance, worſe than an Infidel, in waſting that Proviſion, that he was bound to reſerve for Wife and Children. Thus intemperance is hurtful to the Body. And then it is hurtful to the Soul, as it wages War againſt it. 1 *Pet.* 2. 11. *Dearly beloved, I beſeech you, abſtain from fleſhly Luſts, which war againſt the Soul.* Fulneſs breeds forgetfulneſs of God. *Deut.* 6. 11, 12. *When thou ſhalt have eaten, and art full, then beware leſt thou forget the Lord.* So *Prov.* 30. 9. *Feed me with Food convenient for me, leſt I be full, and deny thee, and ſay, Who is the Lord?*

Lord? It unfits the Soul for all holy Exercises, a full Belly, and a lean Soul usually go together: When the great enquiry is, What shall we eat? what shall we drink? There is a deep silence about the Soul, no such voice heard as, What shall I do to be saved? *A full Belly* (saith one) *neither studies well, nor prays well*; and St. *Paul* saith, in *Rom.* 16. 10. That *they serve not the Lord Christ, that serve their own Bellies.*

In a word, *Intemperance* is so hurtful to your selves, as that without timely repentance, and fleeing it, it will most certainly exclude Soul and Body out of Heaven, and plunge both into Hell for evermore. 1 *Cor.* 6. 9. *Know ye not* (saith the Apostle) *that the Unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God; be not deceived, neither Drunkards,* &c. *Gal.* 5. 19, 20, 21. *Now the works of the Flesh are manifest; Drunkenness, Revellings, and such like, of which I have told you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things, shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.* And in the 12 of *Luke* 45. *If that Servant shall begin to eat and drink, and be drunken, the Lord of that Servant will cut him asunder, and will appoint him his portion with the Unbeliever.* And that is Hell.

And then this Sin of Intemperance is hurtful to others, its injurious to the Poor, cloath-

loathing and feeding them. Many have not Mony for such uses, because they have cast it away, and prodigally consumed it upon their Lusts of Gluttony and Drunkenness. And it's a Sin highly aggravated by the Miseries and Afflictions of the Church of God at this day, wherein God calls for mourning: Now at such a time to say with them in *Isa.* 56. 12. *We will fetch Wine, and we will fill our selves with strong Drink, and to morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant.* O what an aggravation is this. And would to God that I could not apply this Text to our present times: the Lord be merciful to us! What an incongruity is it to hear and see some *Christians* ready to starve, and cry out for a bit of Bread, in one place; and others, *Jesuran* like waxing fat, and kicking for Wantonness; some rowling in Blood, and others in Vomit; some feeding on Ashes, and drinking of Tears, while others fare deliciously every day; some like *Dives*, other like *Lazarus*. O young men, study the hainous nature of this Sin of Intemperance, as it is hateful to God, and hurtful to your selves and others. And then

Thirdly, Study thy self, both the state of thy Soul and Body: enquire and commune with your own Hearts about it, whether thy Soul be in a state of Grace, and Peace with

with God, or of Sin and Enmity? be ſure one of them it is: O labour after a true ſight of it, which it is? if a ſtate of Sin and Enmity, then faſting and abſtinence, become one in thy condition, much more than eating and drinking. Alas, a poor Sinner, unreconciled to God, ready to drop into Hell, and hanker after dainties, and delicacies of Meats and Drinks, how abſurd! But if it be a ſtate of Grace, and Peace, why then Grace will be content with leſs than Nature, and Nature will be content with little. It is Luſt that is ſo outragious, but they that are Chriſt's, have crucified the Fleſh with its Affections, and Luſts. And then ſtudy the ſtate of thy Body too, is it not mortal? muſt it not be e're long Worms meat? and then do but ſoberly judge how far ſuch a thing ſhould be pampered, and at what rates. O methinks a ſight of your ſtate, ſhould make you abhor Gluttony and Epicuriſm. O youth, attend hereunto, remember *Eſau* was called prophane, for parting with his Birth right, for one Morſel of Meat: and when ever you feel your Appetite eager and craving, remember theſe three directions I have now given you, to flee this Sin; which brings me to lay down Rules and Remedies againſt the next youthful Luſt.

Remedies

Remedies againſt that Youthful Sin of Lying.

THis is a Sin I have ſhewed, that Youth are eſpecially prone to, I ſhall very briefly lay down ſome Directions to flee it.

1. Awaken thy Soul, young man, to conſider the danger of this Sin of Lying, and that in theſe two particulars, (1.) Its a badge of a graceleſs Child. And (2.) it's a Bar to endleſs glory: It's a badge of one that's graceleſs; pray ponder on theſe Scriptures, *Iſa.* 63. 8. For he ſaid, *Surely they are my People, Children that will not lye.* And ſo he was their Saviour. And *John* 8. 44. when our Saviour told the wicked Jews, *they were of their Father the Devil, who was a Liar, and the Father of it.* And then (2.) it is a Bar to Life eternal, *Rev.* 21. 27. ver. *And there ſhall in no wiſe enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatſoever maketh a Lye.* But in the 8. ver. of that Chap. it is affirmed, *That all Lyars ſhall have their part in that Lake that burneth with Fire for evermore.* O this Sin hath been the bane of multitudes, it ruin'd *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, in the 5. of the *Acts.* It is one of thoſe ſeven things the Lord hates, *Prov.* 6. 17. Moreover, it is the ruin of all humane Society and Commerce: for where

there

there is no Truth, there can be no Truſt; and where there is no Truſt, there can be no thriving Trade, Truth being the Bond of all human Society. In a word, Lying is the very Image of the Devil.

2. Arm your ſelves before hand with forcible Scripture Arguments, and Antidotes againſt it, that whenſoever the Temptation returns, it may not catch you unprovided. As for inſtance, if hopes of Profit tempt thee to Lye, have it in readineſs, *O Satan, what is a man profited, if he gain the whole World, and loſe his own Soul? or what can a man give in exchange for his Soul? What tell ye me of a little Pelf and Profit that Thieves can ſteal ſuddenly, and that Death will ſtrip me of ſhortly: is this worth the loſing my Soul for, and thoſe unſearchable Riches of Chriſt, and Heaven, that Crown of Life?* If a little fear of mortal frowns, and diſpleaſure from thy Superiours, prompts thee to Lye, provide thy ſelf, and beat back the Tempter with an, *It is written, Who art thou that art afraid of a man that is Graſs? Fear not them that can kill the Body, and no more; but fear him that can deſtroy both Body and Soul, and caſt both into Hell.* O Satan! man cannot damn me, but God can, and will, if I make a Lye. O how much more tolerable is the wrath of a man, that is but a breathing clod of Clay, and is ready.

ready to dye, and turn to Duſt; than the wrath of the living God, that is every moment ready to ſeize the Lyar. Once more; if the Temptation to lye, receive force from hopes of concealment, or that it is not likely ever to be diſcovered, *&c.* ſay, O Devil, can it be concealed from, or lie undiſcovered to the Eye of Heaven? While there is a God above, and a Conſcience within me, can I and my Lye (if I ſhould venture) lie hid long, be ſure it would find me out, to gripe and torment me. Wherefore avoid, avoid Satan. Truth of Speech, and Peace of Conſcience, cannot be too much priz'd, nor too carefully preſerved, according to that old Rule,

Sure to be true, nothing can need a Lye,
A Fault that needs it moſt grows two thereby.

3. and *Laſtly*, Beg hard of God, to purge thy Heart; for out of the evil treaſure of thy heart proceeds Lying, and all Evil, the principal work muſt be about thy Heart, *Pſal.* 12. 2. *They ſpeak Lyes* (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*) *with flattering Lips, and with a double heart do they ſpeak.* Gen. 17. 9. *The Heart is deceitful above all things.* Now if ever you would flee this Sin of Lying, O get the Heart Cure, or this Evil will break out at the Lips again, though you ſhould for

a time bridle your Tongues: As a Spring will have its Courſe, though you ſhould dam up the Stream a while, it will after a while break through all your Banks, and run into the old Channel again: So here it will be even ſo, *For out of the abundance of the Heart the Mouth ſpeaketh*; and the old Heart is a kin to the old Serpent for Lying; it's only the New Heart, that is the true Heart; and until the Heart be renewed, the Tongue cannot be aright reformed. *How can ye that are evil* (ſaith our Saviour) *ſpeak good things?* How can you match a double Heart, and a ſingle Tongue together? a Lying Heart, and a true Tongue? Since there is ſuch a near relation between the one, and the other, as between the Cauſe, and its effect. Now young man, who can create a new and true Heart in thee but God? Whither then ſhouldſt thou go but to him? this was *David*'s practice; how frequently do we find him on his Knees, ſometimes praying that God would make his Heart ſound *in his Statutes*; ſometimes that God would *create in him a clean Heart, and renew a right Spirit within him*; again, ſometimes he prays, *Remove from me the way of Lying*: and was it in vain? Oh no; he was a man after God's own Heart, he would not endure a Lyar in his ſight, in his Houſe.

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The next Sin I ſhall direct you to flee, is neglect of Relative Duties; as Obedience to Parents and Maſters, *&c.*

Remedies againſt that Youthful Sin of Diſobedience to Parents and Maſters.

THis is a Sin peculiar to that ſtate of Life, O Young Man, if you would flee it.

1. Study theſe Scriptures, *Epheſ.* 5. 1. *Col.* 3. 20. *Children obey your Parents*, &c. for this is the firſt Command with promiſe, and it is *well-pleaſing* to God: here is a double Argument to enforce Obedience to Parents. Firſt, it hath a promiſe of long Life annexed, *That thy days may be long in the Land.* Is not this to be reckoned a ſingular Bleſſing, eſpecially as it comes in by the way of a precious Promiſe? O flee Diſobedience, as you would flee immature Death, or being cut off, and cut down, in the flower of your Age; for there is nothing more directly tends to cut ſhort your life, than this Sin of Diſobedience to Parents, as in the Inſtance of *Abſalon.* And then the 2d Argument is, That Obedience to Parents is well-pleaſing to God. O powerful Motive, it wants nothing of ſtrength to move you, only a due Application, and then

2. Consider how the Sin of Disobedience to Superiors, entails God's Curse upon you; see for this these Scriptures, *Prov.* 30. 17. 1 *Sam.* 4. 11. *Lev.* 24. 14. *Deut.* 21. 18. *Deut.* 27. 16.

3. Consider how subject and obedient Christ was to his Parents, *Luke* 2. 51. and should not you be subject to yours? Christ hearkned to his, and wont you to yours? O write after this blessed Copy.

4. Consider how unnatural a thing it is, not to love, honour, and obey your Parents; you have your being from them, and come out of their loins; you have cost them many thousand of Cares and Fears, and Tears, and will you rebel against them? I have observed that there is in Youth, when grown up, usually such headiness and pride in their behaviour towards their Parents, that when they should have most comfort in them, they have most heart-breaking grief and sorrow. O Youth thinks, they are wise enough now to govern, rule, and to dispose of themselves, without advising with their Parents. But be it known to thee, O foolish Youth, God doth not think as thou dost, and long experience hath instructed us of the Errours of unexperienced Youth herein, in those many fatal and

and ruining miſcarriages that have followed upon the evil choice they have made. O young People, pray conſider how much you are the Goods and Poſſeſſions of your Parents; *That you cannot without a kind of Theft* (as one ſaith) *diſpoſe of your ſelves, without the conſent of your Parents.* And I have alſo made this Obſervation, That God doth ſeldom (of all Acts of Diſobedience) ſuffer that of marrying againſt the conſent of Parents, go off the ſtage of this Life unpuniſhed.

And then for Servants that are under the Yoke, who are in great danger of miſcarrying in that Relation, let me prevail with them to treaſure up theſe following Scriptures, *Eph.* 6. 5, 6, 7, 8. *Col.* 3. 22, 23, 24, 25. 1 *Tim.* 6. 1, 2. And eſpecially ſtudy that, *Titus* 2. 9, 10. and 1 *Pet.* 2. 18. *Exhort Servants to be obedient to their own Maſters, and to pleaſe them well in all things; not anſwering again, not purloining, but ſhewing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the Doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.* O remember, that in ſerving your Maſters after the fleſh, in ſingleneſs of Spirit, you herein ſerve the Lord Chriſt.

Remedies againſt that Youthful Sin of Sabbath-breaking.

I Have ſhewed you how prone Youth is to this Sin, and thoſe that are afraid of pilfering from Man, and robbing their Maſters of their Goods, yet make no Conſcience of pilfering, and robbing God of his time. O what multitudes of Youth make this day to be the day of finding their carnal pleaſures, and recreating themſelves; wherefore to direct you how you may flee this Sin.

1. Conſider God hath ſanctified and bleſſed this day, not only as a day for his own Worſhip, but for his own Workmanſhip, in a new creating us in Chriſt Jeſus; it's a ſpecial day for diſpenſing of Grace and Pardon to undone, condemned Sinners, and ſhould we not then ſanctify it, and keep it holy? On this day, the golden Scepter of Grace and Mercy is held forth, and Proclamation is made of an Act of Oblivion to all rebellious Sinners that ſhall throw down their Weapons of Enmity, and come in, and ſubject themſelves to the Lord Jeſus, that their Sins and Iniquities (however aggravated) ſhall be pardoned, and be remembred no more for ever:

ever: and not only ſo, but a Marriage Feaſt is on this day inſtituted to be celebrated, a Feaſt of fat things, wherein the returning Prodigal is crowned with all the expreſſions of joy and honour. *Bring forth the fatted Calf, the beſt Robe, the Ring, let Heaven rejoyce, and make merry*, &c. O Youth! what are thy *Eſau*-like morſels abroad in the Field, but as the husks that Swine do eat, to the dainties of a Father's houſe? O the time is at hand, when the crumbs that fall from the Lord's Table, will be more deſirable than all the ſweet meats of Sin, and the Fleſh that thou meeteſt with in thy rambles on God's Holy day: Thou gaineſt a little fleſhly content and merriment, but loſeſt the bleſſedneſſes promiſed in *Iſa.* 56. 2. *Bleſſed* [*Aſhre* there is the plural number] *is the man that doth this, that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it.* The bleſſedneſs of gracious communion and fellowſhip with the Father, and with his Son Chriſt Jeſus, *&c.* And who can expreſs the heavenly comfort of that! O would you ever be drunk with Wine? or bewitched with the ſordid pleaſures of the Fleſh? If you had once drank of this high Country Wine, the Wine of Heaven's conſolations. Heark, Young Man, to thoſe that have tryed it, *Pſal.* 84. *How amiable are thy Tabernacles*, &c. And ſo the *Pſalm* runs on, *One day in thy Courts is better than a thouſand*

elſewhere. I ſat down under his ſhadow with great delight, and his fruit was ſweet to my taſte, 2 Cant. 3. But I muſt not enlarge.

2. Meditate upon this, how woful a Sin Sabbath-breaking is, and how woful a condition Sabbath-breakers are in. To profane the Sabbath, is a Sin of an high nature, it is a vile deſpiſing the Riches of God's goodneſs. Alas! You could not have a Sabbath, but from his aſtoniſhing mercy. Be ſure then, to profane a Sabbath, is a ſurpaſſing Provocation, beyond the Sin of the Devil, who never had the mercy of one day of the Son of Man's afforded him. Moreover it indicates, and ſheweth that you have no delight in God, in his Service, who have no delight in his day, and is thy want of Love to God a ſmall Sin? *When it is* (as one ſaith) *the very heart of the old Man, the badge of Devils, and damned Spirits.* And then conſider how woful the condition of Sabbath-breakers is, they carry about them the mark of Death and Hell (as 'twere) in their Foreheads, wherever they go; for it's paſt all doubt, that Sabbath-breakers are under the wrath of God, and in a ſtate of alienation to him, and will certainly periſh if they continue in that ſtate.

O Young

O Young Man, ſtrongly impreſs this on thy heart, and ſay, Is this a tolerable condition? Is it wiſdom to continue it an hour longer? O think with your ſelves, what if I had dyed in this Caſe? what had become of me? how exceedingly thou art beholden to the patience of God, that he hath not caſt thee into Hell? The Lord open your eyes, and imprint this Meditation upon your hearts, then you would admire the mercy of a Sabbath, and the proviſions of grace in the Ordinances, and you would loath and deteſt the Tempter, that would entice you to waſte a Moment of ſo bleſſed a Day. Wherefore to cloſe this, I ſhall recite the Teſtimony of a wiſe and learned Perſon * of this Nation, who was (as is noted of him) *natus ad exemplar*, born to be an Example to others; This Excellent Perſon writing to his Children, (of whom he travail'd in Birth, that Chriſt might be formed in them) he freely opens his mind in theſe following Words. "I now write ſome-"thing to you (ſays he) touching the Ob-"ſervation of the Lord's day; becauſe I "find in the World much Looſeneſs and "Apoſtacy from this Duty. People begin "to be cold, and careleſs in it, allowing "themſelves Sports and Recreations, and "ſecular

* *J. Hales.*

"ſecular Imployments in it, without any "neceſſity; which is an ill preſage, and a "ſad Spectacle. He there makes this pro-"feſſion and declaration to them. "I have "found (ſays he) by a ſtrict & diligent obſer-"vation, that a due obſervation of the "Duties of this Day, has ever had joyned "to it a Bleſſing upon the reſt of my time, "and the Week that has been ſo begun, "has been bleſſed and proſperous to me: "And on the other ſide, when I have been "negligent in and of the Duties of this Day, "the reſt of the Week has been unſucceſ-"ful, and unhappy to my own ſecular "Imployment: and this I do not write "lightly, or inconſiderately, but upon "long and ſound Experience.

Here I thought to have given you a qnotation of many Inſtances, very remarkable of God's puniſhing the breakers of this Holy Day; but it would ſwell this Treatiſe too big for the Poor to purchaſe it: and there are indeed few Months that paſs, but you have ſad memorials hereof at *Tyburn* of Malefactors, crying out of this Sin, as introductory to all others, and the ſource and ſpring of all their Miſeries.

The next Sin that Youth is addicted to, is Pride.

Remedies

Remedies againſt that Youthful Sin of Pride.

THat Youth is apt to admire themſelves, for their ſuppoſed Excellences, as Beauty, Parts, Wit, Strength, *&c.* I have ſhewed before, Man is a proud piece of Duſt, and a little thing will puff him up, a Ribbon, a Feather, a Wire, a black ſpot, a bag full of Dirt, a Shop full of Goods, or the Excrements of Beaſts; this is that old Leaven of Corruption, that hath leavened the whole humane nature: hence young *Abſalon* ſwells, *O that I might be Judge of Iſrael.* Wherefore I ſhall lay down ſome directions in order to your fleeing this Sin.

1. Repreſent to thy ſelf how odious and abominable this Sin is to God, as will evidently appear, if thou ſtudy theſe Scriptures. 1 *Peter* 5. *God reſiſteth the Proud,* ἀντιτάσσεται the Word ſignifieth, Sets himſelf in battle array againſt ſuch a perſon. *Proverbs 6.* 16, 17. it is there placed in the front of thoſe ſix things the Lord hates, *A proud look*, &c. *Proverbs* 16. 5. *Every one that is Proud in Heart, is abomination to the Lord; and though Hand joyn in Hand, yet ſhall he not go unpuniſhed.* Iſaiah 23. 8. *Surely the Lord of Hoſts hath purpoſed to ſtain*

ſtain the Pride of all Glory. And in Iſaiah 2. 11. *The Day of the Lord ſhall be upon every one that is Proud, whoſe Heart is lifted up.* O young People, when ever you are affecting a Glory, and a kind of Supremacy to your ſelves, conſider theſe Scriptures, and remember what a God he is, that hath thus expreſſed his hatred of this Sin: he is a God of infinite Greatneſs, and Majeſty, that might in his Soveraignty have left thee in the Womb of Nothing, had he pleaſed; or might have cruſh'd thee into nothing in the Cradle. When he did but let out of his Glory a little to *Job*, and *Iſaiah*, one crys out, *Wo is me! I am an undone man, I have ſeen the Lord*, Iſaiah 6. The other breaks forth, *Behold I am vile, I abhor my ſelf in Duſt and Aſhes, for mine Eyes have ſeen the Lord of Hoſt.* And in Heaven, where he fully ſhineth forth in his Glory, the Elders fall down, and caſt down their Crowns before him that ſitteth on the Throne. O proud Duſt, one glimpſe of the high and lofty One would make thee quake and tremble.

Secondly, Get thy Heart well ſeaſoned with deep Convictions of what a poor ſinful mortal Creature thou art; it is ignorance of your ſelv's, that makes you proud. Hence you read *Rev.* 3. 17. *Thou ſayeſt I am*

am rich, and increaſed with Goods, and have need of nothing, and knoweſt not that thou art wretched, and miſerable, and poor, and blind, and naked. Here you ſee the different judgment of God and man; Whence is it, but from man's ignorance of himſelf? O proud Youth, were you brought but once to underſtand what a leprous, deformed, diſeaſed Soul lodgeth in thy dunghil Body, let Conſcience anſwer whether thou couldſt be Proud or no? a Soul ſo ignorant of, and averſe unto the bleſſed God, ſo unbelieving, unholy, univerſally miſerable and wretched, ſo like to the Devil, and yet be proud? a Soul ſo unreconciled to God, ſo unready for the coming of Chriſt, in ſuch danger of the damnation of Hell, one would think here ſhould be no more room for Pride than there is reaſon for it, and that's none at all, but the quite contrary, namely, lying in Tears, and abaſement before the Lord, and begging of Mercy, better becometh ſuch a Soul. And then for thy Body, wherein this miſerable Soul lodgeth for a few days, one would think thou ſhouldſt have little mind to be proud of that, were it only for the ſake of ſo wretched a Tenant that dwells within: but as wiſely conſider it, and ſee whether there be any thing in it, or no, to be proud of; firſt then, O young man, doſt thou not

know

know it to be a poor, vain, frail, perishing thing; the *Heathen* can tell you this without the Book of Scripture: hast thou now a *juvenile verdure*, and freshness of Complexion, or briskness of Spirits, or quickness of Parts, or strength of Body? and art thou tempted to Pride by any, or all of these? Alas, let but a Feaver, or an Apoplexy seize you, as they may within the space of an hour, and then where are all these? Indeed if thou couldst by thy youthful strength and ability, hinder any of these; and wert so considerable a Creature, as to beat back Sickness and Death, when they come, thou mightest have some pretence for thy boasting; but if thy young Flesh be but as Grass, that can no ways defend it self from the Sythe, then be ashamed and abased in the Dust. Have you not seen? or at least have you not heard? how suddenly many of your Age have drop'd into the Pit; go to the Church-yards, and look among the Graves, and see if there be not shorter Graves than would fit you, and learn humility.

Thirdly, Study an humbled Christ, and abhor Pride for ever. *Mat.* 11. 29. *Learn of me* (saith Christ) *for I am meek and lowly.* And will you be proud and haughty? *Psal.* 22. 6. *I am a Worm, and no Man*, it is spoken

ſpoken of Chriſt. O when you are tempted to be high-minded, and to over-valuing conceits of your ſelves, to think I am ſome body, and deſerve reſpect and eſteem, then look an humbled Chriſt in the face, and loath thy ſelf, and ſay, O proud heart, doſt thou ſtand upon thy Pantofles and Terms, and thy Saviour ſtoop and ſtep down into the form of a Servant? Diſmount, diſmount, proud Duſt, and come down, and *let the ſame mind be in you as was in Chriſt, 2 Phil. 6.*

The next Sin Youth is prone unto, is quenching the Spirit.

Remedies againſt that Youthful Sin of Quenching the Spirit.

I Have ſhewed you how prone Youth is to quench the Motions of the Spirit of God, ſtifling thoſe inward Convictions that are wrought in them of their loſt and undone eſtate by Nature, of the neceſſity of Converſion, and the New Birth, and of their indiſpenſible Duty to uſe the means both publick and private, that God hath appointed in order to their Converſion; there are not a few of *London*'s Youth that are guilty in a high degree of this Sin.

Where-

Wherefore to prevent it for time to come, attend to theſe following directions.

Firſt, Underſtand wherein this Sin of Quenching the Spirit ſtands, and that's the firſt ſtep to Reformation in this point. Quenching is a metaphorical part of Speech, it is borrowed from a Fire or Lamp, that uſeth to give light and heat; now this applied to the Spirit, it muſt follow that the Spirit is a Fire heating, and Light enlightning the Soul; and therefore in reference hereunto, the Apoſtle in the 1. *Theſ.* 5. 19. ſaith, *Quench not the Spirit*: how that is done, may be gathered from the metaphor thus, a Fire or Light is two manner of ways quenched, (1.) By withdrawing of Fuel from it: (2.) By caſting of Water upon it. So it is here with this heavenly Fire, (1.) When we withdraw from the means, as Prayer, and the Word, and Holy Watchfulneſs, theſe are as materials to keep in the Fire; and when we decline, or reſtrain theſe, we quench the Spirit in his Influences, they decay and dye away within us: Miſcarriages of this kind Divines call *Omiſſions*. (2.) When (though we do not decline Ordinances) we adventure upon commiſſions of Sin; this now extinguiſheth, and directly quencheth the Spirit's light and heat; this is as water caſt on, it preſently puts out the Fire.

O that young ones would attend hereunto, for want of regarding theſe things many periſh, and go to Hell. If ever any thing was to be deplored in this world, this is to be deplored, that the Spirit of God, when he comes with his Light and Heat to ſanctifie and ſave us, we grieve him, reſiſt him, tempt him, vex him, quench him, theſe are all Scripture expreſſions. O Lord, what account ſhall there be at that great and terrible Day for theſe things! Learn hence young ones, that when you have this bleſſed Spirit, either in Sermon-time, or other times, like a Sun riſing and ſhining into your dark Soul's, ſhewing you as clear as Noon-day, that your Courſes have been naught, that thus, and thus, haſt thou done; and that without the New Creature, Faith, Repentance, *&c.* thou art undone for ever; and ſhewing thee farther, that thou haſt before thee a bleſſed offer of Chriſt, and the great Salvation, purchaſed with his Blood, aſuring thee if thou caſt away thy Trangreſſions, and come in, and accept the Grace offered, thou ſhalt not periſh, but have Everlaſting Life; and probably this bleſſed Spirit goes on further, awakening thy Conſcience, ſtirring up thy Affections, that thou goeſt from the Sermon ſmitten, wounded as with an Arrow ſticking within thee; ſo that thou haſt

some Light and Heat too: (a mercy thou canst never enough value.) If now thou trifleſt, and groweſt careleſs of means, and through neglect of Prayer, and omiſſion of other Duties, ſuffereſt theſe Sparks to dye in the Embers; then thou art verily guilty of this horrible Sin, of quenching the Spirit: much more if (inſtead of calling for the Bellows, and blowing while there is a Fire) thou adventureſt to caſt on Water, *i. e.* to run into *Evil* Company, to yield to thy vile Corruptions, to drink the poyſoned Cup, and eat of the forbidden murdering Morſels; then be ſure with an high hand, with a witneſs, you are guilty of quenching the Spirit. O the unſpeakable miſery this brings! O that ever you can hear theſe things without Trembling! This is the firſt direction, to get a true Knowledge what this Sin is.

2. When you know it, ſtudy the grievous and hainous nature of it, that your wanton Hearts may be awed, and affrighted from the leſt approaches towards it for time to come. O young people, is it now a time of the Spirit's ſtriving in you, ſtirring of you, and ſtriving with you? O take heed, for now is Satan moſt converſant, and inſtant to pick out your Eyes, to blow out the Light; And this he can never do with-

without thy own agency, and compliance with him; though he is a Creature full of Malice, Subtilty, and of great Power, yet (bleſſed be God, he cannot force you; oppoſe you he will, you muſt expect it now more than ever, for now he is afraid of loſing you. *Luke* 11. 42. therefore look for your ſhare: but though he hath an oppoſing Power, yet he hath not an enforcing Power. Hence in *James* 4. 7. *Reſiſt the Devil, and he will flee.* But now if inſtead of reſiſting the evil Spirit, you ſhould reſiſt the Good Spirit, for both may be reſiſted; O the grievous and hainous Nature of this Sin, words can't expreſs it: without all queſtion it's greatly influential towards the filling up the Meaſure of Sin, and the Vials of God's Wrath. And it may be ſaid of ſuch, as the Apoſtle hath it in 2 *Pet.* 2. 21. *It had been better they had never known the Way of Righteouſneſs, than having known it, to turn away from the Holy Commandment given to them.* They are in danger of theſe threatned Judgments, *John* 12. 40. and *Prov.* 1. 28. and *Pſal.* 81. 12. and *Hoſ.* 4. 17. and *Ezek.* 24 13. and *Heb.* 3. 11. and *Heb.* 6. 4, 5, 6. O that young ones, would read and tremble at theſe Scriptures, to deter them from quenching the Spirit, as they would ever eſcape having their lot and portion, in ſuch dreadful and tremendous

dous Judgments, as are contained in those places. O take warning, Young Men, lest you be hardned to destruction: God hath removed many a one of your Equals already; neglected Talents have been taken away from many Drones and Dallyers, according to that 13. *Matth.* 12. *Whosoever hath not,* (i. e. improves not,) *from him shall be taken away, that which he seems to have.* There is no prevention of this Judgment, but by improving your Talents, and knowing the things of your Peace in your day.

3. Never rest in Convictions, till they bring you to rest in Christ. Many, when under some sense of Sin and Misery, and some apprehensions of Mercy, they will go and pray, and may be weep too; and upon this (without real union to and application of Christ and his Blood) they grow well again, and think now all the danger is over, I am a new man; I was Prayerless, now I Pray; I was a careless wretch, careless of God, and my Soul; but now I bless God things are quite otherwise with me, and my House is swept and garnished, and the unclean Spirit that is gone, will return no more, *&c.* Here multitudes take up their Rest short of Christ, patching up a Righteousness of their own, hoping by their pedling Wares to maintain themselves,

ſelves, and all this while ignorant of Chriſt, and his Righteouſneſs, or at leaſt ſee no ſuch abſolute neceſſity of him; ſo that the Peace and Reſt they get, is not from Chriſt's Blood, but their own Prayers and Tears; not from his attonement, but their own amendment, *&c.* And as multitudes take up their ſtand here, ſo from hence may they date their fatal fall. Wherefore I beſeech you reſt not in any thing of your own, ſhort of Chriſt; and to the end you may not, I add in the next place,

4. Study that great Scripture, in *Rom.* 3. 25. *Whom God hath ſet forth to be a Propitiation through Faith in his Blood*; and what followeth, pray mark, twice it's expreſſed, *to declare his Righteouſneſs in Remiſſion of Sins*: and in the cloſe of the 26. verſe, *That God might be juſt, in juſtifying the Sinner that believes in Chriſt.* For the opening of this a little, I beſeech you conſider, the caſe between God and man ſtood thus, God made man upright, man ſins, falls under the ſanction of that Law he broke, viz. *In the Day thou eateſt thereof thou ſhalt dye.* Now ſuch is the Holineſs of God's Nature, that he cannot but hate Sin, and ſuch is the Impartiality of his Juſtice and Righteouſneſs, that Heaven and Earth may ſooner paſs away, than

the leaſt Jot or Title of his Law paſs away unaccompliſhed, though fooliſh Sinners make nothing of breaking it; Well then, the great caſe is, How ſhall Sin be pardoned, and the Sinner ſaved? If Juſtice come upon the Sinner for ſatisfaction, it will ſwallow him up in the Gulf of eternal miſery: Therefore had this queſtion been put to the innumerable Hoſt of Angels in Heaven, what way ſinful man could be ſaved, and yet Juſtice ſatisfied, and the Law fulfilled? They would have been everlaſtingly puzled and pos'd; no leſs then the infinite Wiſdom of God could ever have found it out, which is called Wiſdom in a Myſtery. Now that Myſtery is revealed in this glorious Text, *God the Father hath ſent, and ſet forth his own Son in our Natures, to be a Propitiation through Faith in his Blood, to declare his Righteouſneſs and Juſtice, as well as his Grace and Mercy, in pardoning and ſaving ſuch, and only ſuch as believe in Jeſus.* So that if you neglect Chriſt, and Faith in his Blood, do what you will, you will be ſtill under the Curſe of the Law, and the Wrath of God, you can never eſcape Condemnation, it's impoſſible it ſhould be otherwiſe: without the ſhedding of Blood, there can be no Remiſſion, *Heb.* 9. 22. It cannot be the Blood of a meer Creature that can

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take away Sin; it must be the Blood of that Immaculate Lamb of God: And when all this is understood, there is another great Truth you must know, and that is, that there must be Faith in this Blood, or there can be no actual Remission of your Sins: and therefore in vain do Sinners support their hopes of pardon in Heaven, with their own Righteousness, saying, We have sinned, but God is merciful, and we now repent and reform, and turn to God, &c. Alas poor Soul, can these make Satisfaction, and make up a Ransom and Price for a Sinner's Redemption; what need Christ have shed his Blood then? It's true, these Duties are excellent in their due place, and must be performed: but will you put them in Christ's room, and make Saviours of them, then you put an undoing Cheat upon your poor Souls, and will miscarry for ever under your Convictions, and amidst all your Performances; for he that believeth not, the Wrath of God abideth on him, and he shall not see Life. And therefore if you would not quench the blessed Spirit, and perish after all his strivings with you, and shewing you your Sin and Misery. I add in the next Direction.

5. Prayer, this is an excellent means, to prevent miscarrying under the operations, and workings of the Spirit of God, O let nothing be able to keep God, and your Souls asunder: Are you under the Convictions of the Spirit, and don't know what course to take for Peace with God, and freedom from Condemnation? Away to the Throne of Grace, and there pour out thy Complaints into the Bosom of God, and say,

O Lord! I am a sinful wretched vile miserable Creature, I have destroyed my self; time was I was ignorant, and knew it not, but now thy Spirit has awakened my Conscience, and opened my blind Eyes to see my Sin and Misery; so that I am now convinc'd, that I must be damned without Faith in a crucified Christ; but alas, Lord, I have such a cursed base deceitful hard and unbelieving Heart in me, that I can't tell what in the world to do for an Interest in Christ. Lord, I am without strength, I beseech thee to pity a poor undone Sinner, that is now driven to thy Door by want and misery.

And here plead hard, and make Supplication for an Heart to believe, and that in spite of all Discouragements; first tell him, what thou hast heard of his Benignity and tender Compassion, That the

King of *Iſrael* is a merciful King, and that thou haſt heard of an Eternal Deſign of Grace to poor Sinners, and how in the Fulneſs of Time he ſent his Son to ſeek and to ſave what was loſt, and opened a Fountain of Grace, and eſtabliſhed an everlaſting Covenant of Grace in the Blood of Chriſt, and now has ſet forth in the Goſpel his Son to be a Propitiation through Faith in his Blood, and has made proclamation to all rebellious Sinners to come in, and accept of Mercy through Chriſt, and commanded upon pain of Damnation to take Chriſt, and with him all ſaving good. Then plead thy compliance with the Goſpel-Call, and ſay, *O bleſſed Lord! in obedience to thy Call, lo I am come here, a poor trembling ſtarving Beggar, that of all that ever came in, and knocked at thy Door; none more in need of a Saviour and Salvation than I.*

Now here ſuggeſt thy Wants, and ſay, *Lord I want Faith, I have (through thy Mercy) awakenings of Conſcience, but I want to be in Chriſt, that my Nature may be renewed: I ſee my undone ſtate without him, but I want union with him. Lord! while I am without Chriſt, I am without ſtrength. O draw me, O let it be the Day of thy Power; haſt thou not ſaid, no man can come except thou draw? and dear Lord, I find the impotency of my*

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own cannot; O let me find the Efficacy of thy own Power, and feel the vertue of thy Almighty Arm drawing me to Christ. Lord, perſwade me; make my Heart to ſtoop, ſubdue my ſtrong Corruptions, diſpoſſeſs and diſarm that malignant party in my Soul, demoliſh thoſe ſtrong Holds of Sin and Hell there. O Lord! this is a ſad condition, to be unreconciled to thee, and uneſpouſed to Christ. O pity and help one that ſeeth reaſon enough to believe, but has not ſtrength enough; my Inſufficiencies are equal with my Neceſſities, though I can never get to Heaven without Faith and Holineſs; and though I know I want both, yet Lord thou knoweſt, I am no more able to change my ſinful nature, and be the Author of Faith to my ſelf, than I am to create a World, or quicken and raiſe the Dead; but if thou will make bare thy Arm, it will ſoon be done, my proud Heart ſhall ſoon be humble, my hard Heart ſhall ſoon become ſoft, my unbelieving Heart be made believing: O ſpeak but the Word, and a poor Sinner that has fear'd burning in Hell hundreds of times, ſhall ſing thy Praiſe; O thou that commandeſt me to turn, Turn thou me, and I ſhall be turned.

And here plead his Promiſe, and Chriſt's Purchaſe after ſome ſuch manner as this.

Bleſſed Lord! haſt thou not promiſed, that thou will not caſt out him that cometh to thee;

thee; and that thou wilt give thy holy Spirit to him that asks, and that it shall be opened to him that knocks; and that thou wilt take away the Heart of Stone, and give a Heart of Flesh, and give a New Heart, and remember Sin no more: Lord, if these be not thine own Promises, I'll be content to go away empty. And are not all thy Promises yea, and Amen? Is it not one of thy Titles, God who cannot lye hath promised. And thou never yet didst break thy Word with any poor Sinner, nor suffer the Word that has gone out of thy Mouth to fail, but art the same to day, yesterday, and for ever, in whom there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning. O remember thy Word, wherein and whereon thou hast made me to hope; and remember me a poor Sinner now at thy Feet, laden with Iniquity, groaning and labouring under a burthen, too heavy for me to bear: and O remember thy Son's Blood, and if that be not sufficient to discharge all I owe, and procure all I want, then let Justice seize me. Tell God, He will be better paid with Christ's Blood, than thy own, and that his Justice will have more Glory in saving thee for the sake of Christ's Obedience, than in damning thee for the sake of thy own disobedience; that if he throw thee into the Prison of Hell, to pay what thou owest, he will never have a full satis-

ſatisfaction; but if he ſave thee, and take thee up to Heaven, upon the account of Chriſt's Blood, he will have all paid at one ſum, and receive a plenary ſatisfaction. And tell him, That thou art reſolved never to leave him to the laſt gaſp, until he Bleſs thee with the Grace and Mercy thou needeſt, till it be out of doubt that thou art in Chriſt, and throughly converted, ſay, *This I muſt have, there is no enduring of it, I will mourn, and be in bitterneſs, while I have a being, till I find this Grace in thy ſight; O I will never depart from thy Door, whither ſhould I go, thou alone haſt the words of Eternal Life.*

And know for thy Comfort, that when once it cometh to this, never queſtion it, thou ſhalt have an anſwer of Grace to thy comfort and content. God's bowels will yern towards you, as they did to *Ephraim*, and the Prodigal Son at his return.

And thus now I have done, and I know that e're long God will bring me and you by Death to Judgment; but whether ever he will bring me to this place to ſpeak more, or you to hear more, I know not: I have endeavoured to warn you, and wooe you, and win you to Chriſt; I have told you again, and again, this can never be, except you flee your youthful

youthful Lusts: I have described them to you, and laid down Directions how to Flee these Lusts, excepting the five last, *Atheism*, and *Ridiculing serious Godliness*, *Swearing*, *Time-wasting Uncleanness*: and, which is last, *a Woful giddiness and greediness of temper to drink down Errours*. But having not in publick as yet insisted on these at large, I forbear the Printing of them.

Wherefore in the conclusion, I demand of you, Young People, what is your resolution? Dare any of you maintain a league and friendship with your Lusts, in rebellion against the express Command and Call of God; to flee them; if so, O remember these Truths once Preached, and now Printed (as despised as they are now) will be a swift and fearful Witness against you another day, and confound you, like as the appearance of the Fingers of a man's Hand on the Wall, did that stout Sinner *Belshazar*. For who ever hardened himself against God and prospered?

Well, once more, and may be no more for ever, I ask you, in the Name of him that made you, and will judge you, will you flee your Lusts or no? Will you lay down these Weapons, and take Jesus, and be ruled by him or no? O let thy

thy Voice be with the Prodigal, *I will arise and go to my Father, and say, I have sinned.* Or with *Ephraim, What have I any more to do with Idols? Behold thou art the Lord our God, we come, we come.* O that God would make me the happy Instrument of converting Grace, this day, while it's called to day. O who can endure to see Satan get Souls to Hell from under our Pulpit. O awake, awake, up and be doing, it may be the last knock Christ by me will give: I am wounded to think of leaving any of you in Hell's way: The Lord give you understanding in all things.

FINIS.

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